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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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K'taka govt officially appoints Saleem as DG&IGP

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The Karnataka government has officially appointed MA Saleem IPS as the state's Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG&IGP) and Head of Police Force (HoPF). Saleem was acting in the role after Alok Mohan's retirement in May. An official notification states, "MA Saleem, IPS (KN: 1993), Director General of Police, CID, Special Units & Economic Offences, Bengaluru is appointed as Director General and Inspector General of Police (HoPF), Karnataka, Bengaluru carrying the Apex Scale, Level-17 i.e. Rs 2,25,000/-(fixed)." With over 30 years' service, Saleem has held 26 assignments, including Director General of Police (CID). He is renowned for his work to ease Bengaluru's traffic, having served in various traffic and security roles. *—PTI*

Activist submits proof of forgery in Dharmasthala probe

MANGALURU, 30 AUG

Activist Girish Mattannavar has handed over a 500-page document claiming that there was rampant forgery in Dharmasthala Panchayat to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) mass burial case. This document sheds light on several unnatural deaths in Dharmasthala over the past 35 years, calling for a deeper investigation into these incidents. Mattannavar alleged that there was no proper investigation into these deaths, despite several of them being suspicious. He said the Dharmasthala police had failed to conduct thorough probes and asked if there was an intentional cover-up. *—PTI*

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PM lands in China after 7 yrs, to meet XI

Zelenskyy calls PM ahead of Putin meet at SCO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed with a performance by artistes upon his arrival at the airport in Tianjin, China, on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

TIANJIN, 30 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in China on Saturday after a seven-year gap, marking a significant visit amid heightened global tensions. Modi is in Tianjin to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit on 31 August and 1 September, with key bilateral talks scheduled with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday.

The visit comes in the wake of recent strains in India-US relations, particularly following Washington's tariff policies that have affected global economies. During his time in China, Modi is expected to discuss ways to normalise India-China relations, which have been under pressure since the 2020 eastern Ladakh border clashes.

His discussions with Xi will focus on economic ties and regional stability, as both nations look to mitigate the fallout of global economic volatility.

> **There are no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests. India does not consider anyone an enemy**
>
> -Rajnath Singh , Defence Minister

In a pre-departure interview with The Yomiuri Shimbun, Modi emphasised the importance of India and China working together to stabilise the world economic order. "Given the current volatility in the world economy, it is also important for India and China, as two major economies, to collaborate," Modi said.

Modi's diplomatic agenda in Tianjin also includes talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the SCO summit. The ongoing Ukraine conflict is expected to be a key topic of discussion. Earlier in the day, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke with Modi, reiterating Ukraine's commitment to peace and its readiness to engage with Russia. Zelenskyy expressed appreciation for India's support in peaceful conflict resolution, noting that India could play a key role in delivering crucial signals to Moscow.

Modi's trip to China comes less than a fortnight after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited India.

Following Wang's wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, the two sides unveiled a series of measures for a "stable, cooperative and forward-looking" relationship between the two sides. —PTI

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'Human GPS' terrorist guide killed in J&K

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Security forces have killed **Bagu Khan**, widely known as the "human GPS" within terror ranks, during an operation in Gurez on Saturday. Also known as Samandar Chacha, Khan had been based in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) since 1995 and was one of the most prolific facilitators of infiltration along the Line of Control (LoC).

Sources within the security grid state that Bagu Khan was responsible for over 100 infiltration attempts, most of which succeeded due to his detailed knowledge of the region's rugged terrain and secret routes. His expertise made him highly valuable to all terror groups operating in the area. Despite being a Hizbul Mujahideen commander, he aided a range of outfits in planning and executing cross-border infiltrations from Gurez and surrounding sectors.

His ability to evade security forces for years finally ended during the recent infiltration attempt. "The killing of Bagu Khan is seen as a significant blow to the terror logistics network in the area," an official said. The operation came just days after two terrorists attempting to cross the LoC in Gurez were gunned down by the Indian Army.

The encounter took place near Naushehra Naar as part of Operation Naushera Nar IV, where alert troops engaged heavily armed infiltrators. A brief exchange of fire resulted in the deaths of two terrorists, marking a major success in counter-terror operations in the region. *—Agencies*

The cancellation follows months of growing tension between US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi *PHOTO: PTI*

Trump no longer has plans to visit India for Quad: NYT

NEW YORK, 30 AUG

US President Donald Trump has reportedly cancelled plans to visit India for the Quad Summit later this year, as tensions between him and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi have deepened in recent months.

In a report titled 'The Nobel Prize and a Testy Phone Call: How the Trump-Modi Relationship Unraveled', The New York Times (NYT) revealed that Trump "no longer has plans" to travel to India in the fall, after initially agreeing to attend the summit. Neither the US nor Indian governments have officially commented on the development.

The article highlighted how relations soured following Trump's repeated claims of having "solved" the India-Pakistan conflict in May—an assertion that was firmly denied by India. "President Trump's repeated claims about having 'solved' the India-Pakistan war infuriated Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India. And that was only the beginning," the NYT report said.

Tensions escalated during a 35-minute phone call between Trump and Modi on June 17, which occurred as Trump was returning from the G7 Summit in Canada. The NYT reported that Trump again boasted about "ending" the military escalation and mentioned Pakistan's Nobel Peace Prize nomination for him, implying that Modi should also consider nominating Trump. Modi reportedly "bristled" at the suggestion, telling Trump that the ceasefire had been settled directly between India and Pakistan, not through US mediation. The disagreement over the Nobel nomination "has played an outsize role in the souring relationship between the two leaders," according to the NYT. Trump's ongoing claims of resolving the conflict have now been made more than 40 times since 10 May 10, further straining diplomatic ties.

In addition, Trump imposed 25 per cent tariffs on India's Russian oil imports, a move analysts suggest was aimed at punishing India for not aligning with US policies on Russia. Despite Trump's repeated attempts to reach Modi, "the Indian leader did not respond to those requests," the NYT added. *—PTI*

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The report recommends legal action against erring officials and systemic reforms to curb corruption *PHOTO: FLICKR*

Panel submits 8,900-page report on BBMP irregularities

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The judicial commission headed by Justice HN Nagamohan Das has submitted an 8,900-page report to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on alleged irregularities in 761 works executed under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) between 2019-20 and 2022-23.

The report recommends legal action against erring officials and systemic reforms to curb corruption.

The commission conducted a thorough investigation, examining files, conducting site visits, and verifying accounts. Several deficiencies were found during scrutiny of 528 randomly selected projects and 233 additional works.

According to a press release from the Chief Minister's Office, the inquiry report, along with annexures, details alleged irregularities in BBMP projects executed during 2019-20 to 2022-23

The release recalled that on 13 July, 2023, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar had recommended a comprehensive inquiry into widespread corruption.

On 5 August, 2023, the government formed four special investigation committees, but these were withdrawn on 15 December, 2023, and the probe was handed over to Justice Nagamohan Das Commission.

A government notification on April 20, 2024, clarified that the commission would continue the investigation incorporating issues already reviewed by the earlier committees. The report has urged the government to initiate legal proceedings against officers found responsible and to introduce corrective measures in project implementation. *—PTI*

11 killed in cloudburst, landslide in J&K

JAMMU/SHIMLA, 30 AUG

In Jammu and Kashmir, heavy rains triggered a cloudburst and landslides, resulting in 11 deaths across Reasi and Ramban districts. Among the deceased were Nazir Ahmad, his wife Wazira Begum, and their sons Bilal Ahmed, Mohd Mustafa, Mohd Adil, Mohd Mubarak, and Mohd Wasim. Their house on a hill slope was buried in debris while they slept. Locals, aided by police, recovered the bodies. Additionally, four people, including two brothers, died after a cloudburst damaged two houses and a school in Ramban, causing flash floods in Rajgarh. The district administration is on high alert, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah instructing officials to monitor the situation and evacuate at-risk populations.

Police personnel during a rescue operation after a cloudburst following heavy rainfall in Ramban on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Himachal has suffered losses of Rs 3,040 crore due to 91 flash floods, 45 cloudbursts and 93 major landslides since 20 June

10 pilgrims dead, several missing in Himachal Rain

Meanwhile, in Himachal Pradesh's Chamba district, at least 10 pilgrims lost their lives, four are missing, and seven others were injured amid severe weather disrupting the annual Manimahesh Yatra. Continuous rainfall and landslides have blocked key routes, leaving thousands stranded. Rescue operations, involving the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and mountain rescue teams, have rescued approximately 6,000 pilgrims so far. "Once the weather cleared, rescue teams launched extensive operations," said Rana, SDMA Special Secretary. Helicopter sorties evacuated the sick and vulnerable to Chamba Medical College. The Chamba-Pathankot highway has reopened, but landslides persist on other routes.

So far this year, 164 people have died in rain-related disasters across Himachal Pradesh, with 40 still missing, and 153 in road accidents. *—PTI*

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TEJASHWI NAMES HIMSELF 'CM FACE'; RAGA STAYS MUM

PATNA, 30 AUG

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav unilaterally declared himself as the chief ministerial face of the INDIA blocin Bihar. The announcement came during a rally in Ara, in presence of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav. Rahul, who has so far avoided commenting on the CM face issue, was present on the dais, yet remained silent as Tejashwi took charge. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also pledged full support, sharing campaign insights from Uttar Pradesh.

At the Ara rally in Bhojpur, part of Rahul Gandhi's Voter Adhikar Yatra, Tejashwi criticised Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, calling him a "copycat CM" who merely imitates policies without genuine leadership. He asked the crowd, mostly youth, whether they wanted an "original chief minister" or a "duplicate," to which they loudly responded, "We want an original chief minister," with chants of "Tejashwi Yadav zindabad."

Akhilesh Yadav expressed confidence that Bihar would back the INDIA alliance to defeat the BJP, praising Tejashwi's tenure as Deputy Chief Minister. He urged Bihar to emulate Uttar Pradesh's success and criticised the Election Commission as a "Jugad Aayog."

CPI-ML's Dipankar Bhattacharya confirmed Tejashwi as the CM candidate, while Congress MP Akhilesh Prasad Singh reiterated his support. BJP activists protested Gandhi's visit, but he responded calmly with sweets. *—Agencies*

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MONTHS AFTER TRAGERDY

RCB gives ₹25L aid to stampede victims' kin

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) have announced Rs 25 lakh in financial aid to the families of the 11 victims who lost their lives in a stampede on June 4, during celebrations of the team's maiden Indian Premier League (IPL) victory. The stampede occurred outside the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, where over 2,50,000 people gathered to celebrate RCB's historic win.

This fresh compensation comes nearly three months after RCB had initially provided Rs 10 lakh to each family, a day after the tragedy. The team had also launched the "RCB Cares" initiative on June 5, a fund intended to support the victims of the stampede.

In an emotional statement posted on Saturday, RCB said, "Our hearts broke on 4 June, 2025. We lost eleven members of the RCB family. Their absence will echo in the memories of each one of us." The franchise added that the Rs 25 lakh aid was a first step in their ongoing commitment to show compassion and care.

Two days earlier, on August 28, RCB posted for the first time in almost three months, saying, "The Silence wasn't Absence. It was Grief." The team acknowledged how 4 June had changed everything, and that the silence since then was a way of holding space for the loss. *—PTI*

The stampede occurred outside the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, where over 2,50,000 people gathered to celebrate RCB's historic win *PHOTO: ANI*

PHOTO: XXX

CM to attend events in Mysuru on 31 Aug, 1 Sept

MYSURU, 30 AUG

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will be on a two day visit to Mysuru on 31 August and 1 September. On arriving in Mysuru from Bengaluru in a special aircraft on 31 August, Siddaramaiah will take part in 80th birthday celebrations of MLC, Kannada film producer Sandesh Nagaraj. At 3pm, he will take part in Bhagiratha Jayanthi utsav organised by District Administration in front of Srikanteshwara temple in Nanjangud, and also inaugurate Uppara Community Hall. On 1 September, he will take part in the inauguration function of new building of PM Shree Public School at his native place. In the evening, he will receive President Droupadi Murmu at Mysuru airport and share the dais during the AIISH's diamond jubilee celebrations. *—Salar News*

Rape accused shot in the leg, arrested

BELAGAVI, 30 AUG

Police shot at a man, who was accused in several criminal cases like gang rape, dacoity, robbery and possession of illegal arms, in the leg and arrested him on Saturday morning in Belagavi after he allegedly attacked a constable while trying to escape. The incident occurred around 6am in the outskirts of Kittur town when accused, Ramesh Kilari allegedly stabbed constable Sharif Dafedar with a knife and attempted to flee. Kilari ignored PSI Praveen Gongolli's warning shot in the air and kept running which led to officer shooting Kilari in the leg. Kilari is said to be involved in several serious crimes and is wanted in four dacoity, one money snatching, one gang rape and three other cases. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Health body vows transparency in drug supply

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Karnataka State Medical Services Corporation (KSMSCL) Director Kanagavalli has assured citizen groups that all drug procurement data will be published online, alongside new measures to strengthen supply and quality of free medicines in government hospitals. The commitment came in a meeting with nearly 70 representatives of Sarvatrika Arogya Andolana–Karnataka, Drug Action Forum–Karnataka and community leaders, who cited frequent shortages. Kanagavalli said KSMSCL has approval to procure over 800 medicines. Drugs will remain quarantined until test results clear them, and vendors must supply in smaller batches. *—Salar News*

Dental services must reach every village: Patil

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Dental healthcare reach every village, said Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil, Minister for Medical Education, Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, Livelihood and Raichur District In-charge. Patil revealed that the government was planning several key initiatives, including the creation of a new Dental Council. This State council will function in line with the guidelines of the National Dental Commission.Speaking at the Dentist Summit 2025 organised by the Indian Dental Association at Dr S Ramachandra Auditorium in the Government Dental College campus, Patil stressed that the government is working on concrete plans to expand dental services to rural communities. *—Salar News*

Rijiju slams retired judges' campaign against Shah

'Parl disruptions loss for MPs; Govt can push bills when it likes'

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju on Saturday questioned retired High Court judges' involvement in the ongoing process to elect the Vice President, criticising their signature campaign and comments against Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Speaking to reporters at Vidhana Soudha in City, Rijiju said, "Some retired judges have written something against the Home Minister. This is not good. The election for Vice President is a political matter — why should retired judges interfere? It gives an impression that they had a distinct ideology even when they were judges. This is not right".

The minister also accused Congress leaders of using abusive language against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju *PHOTO: PTI*

- Rijiju said that the letter, where the reitred judges defended the INDIA bloc's VP candidate Sudershan Reddy now colours their previous verdicts.

"We are democratic people and we speak with respect, but Opposition leaders — be it Rahul Gandhi or some MPs, including Mahua Moitra— have resorted to invective. (This) is not good for the nation's future," he said.

Rijiju added that the Congress was blaming the Election Commission (EC) for its losses.

"What's the point in abusing the EC if people are not voting for you?" he said. "It's not our fault that people don't like you (Rahul Gandhi)."

"The people of India will never give an opportunity to a person who has such kind of thinking and uses filthy language," he remarked.

Later, addressing Karnataka High Court advocates, Rijiju said that pressure must be applied if a party leader shows no interest in debates and discussions and instead resorts to ruckus and political theatrics. The disruptions in are a loss to the MPs, not the government, which enjoys a majority.

"The government will push through its bills whenever required, but the loss is for the members, particularly Opposition MPs," he said. *—PTI*

Activist hands over 500-pager to SIT alleging forgery in D'sthala probes

MANGALURU, 30 AUG

Activist Girish Mattannavar has handed over a 500-page document claiming that there was rampant forgery in Dharmasthala Panchayat to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) mass burial case. This document sheds light on several unnatural deaths in Dharmasthala over the past 35 years, calling for a deeper investigation into these incidents.

Mattannavar alleged that there was no proper investigation into these deaths, despite several of them being suspicious. He said the Dharmasthala police had failed to conduct thorough probes and asked if there was an intentional cover-up.

SIT officers have summoned Panchayat officials, including the village officer and staff, for questioning and have started comparing the official records to the ones presented by Mattannavar to uncover potential discrepancies.

Meanwhile, the SIT took the masked complainant to undisclosed locations for a spot mahazar, police said.

The complainant is also being taken to Bengaluru, where the SIT believes he got the human skull he carried during his initial complaint.

Meanwhile, Home Minister G Parameshwara reiterated that the government cannot fix a time frame for the SIT and asserted that the team must work independently.

He said that no information can be disclosed until the SIT completes the investigation.

"We will not interfere or give them any instructions.... We don't know where this case will lead. If it is completed soon, the report will be submitted soon. They will investigate until the case reaches a logical end. This is not the kind of matter where you can say, 'finish it in a week and give the report'. We cannot fix a time frame," he said.

—Salar News with Agencies

ALMOST THERE

Workers building the final phase of the flyover project at Veerabhadra Nagar on Ring Road, in Bengaluru on Saturday. The flyover is set to be inaugurated in the first week of October *PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD*

Heavy rains continue to disrupt coastal region

MANGALURU, 30 AUG

Heavy rainfall continued to impact parts of the State's coastal and Malnad regions on Saturday, affecting districts including Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga, and Kodagu. In Honnavar taluk of Uttara Kannada, the Deputy Commissioner declared a holiday for all anganwadis, primary, and high schools as a precaution due to expected incessant rains. Similarly, the Dakshina Kannada district administration announced a holiday for Anganwadis and schools up to high school level.

The fishermen have been advised against venturing into the sea amid strong winds and rough waves. Udupi has experienced flooding in some interior villages due to downpour.

Minor landslides have been reported in Chikkamagaluru and Shivamogga. Kodagu is raising concerns over potential landslides.

The District administration has urged residents in high-risk areas to exercise caution. *—PTI*

LAKHS AFFECTED?

HC seeks Centre's reply on Online Gaming Act

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The Karnataka High Court sought the Union government's response to a petition challenging the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, which petitioners argue threatens to wipe out the livelihood of thousands of people overnight.

The matter was heard by Justice BM Shyam Prasad, who granted time to the Centre to file its reply while allowing the petitioners to submit detailed arguments in support of their plea for an interim stay on the Act's operation.

Senior counsel representing the petitioners contended that although the Act had received Presidential assent, it had not yet been notified. He argued that immediate implementation would deal a severe blow to the industry.

"If this industry is shut down overnight, the consequences will be serious. The government should either withhold notification until we are heard, or at least provide one week's notice so we can approach the court," counsel submitted.

Appearing for the Union government, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said this was the first time a court would be scrutinising the competence of such legislation, given its cross-border implications. He added that once Parliament passes a law and it receives Presidential assent, notification is part of the constitutional process.

The court then adjourned the matter, directing the Union to place its response along with the petitioner's submissions seeking interim relief.

The petitioners have challenged the Online Gaming Act on the grounds that it was enacted without consultation or deliberation, despite the government earlier promoting the online skill-gaming industry. They contended that the sudden shift risks crores of rupees in investments and threatens the livelihood of over two lakh employees in the sector.

> **Courts may not interfere at this stage. Merely because an individual feels aggrieved, it does not mean the government is required to give advance notice before notifying the law**
>
> -Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General, appearing for the Centre

The plea says the Act violates fundamental rights under the Constitution. *—PTI*

'NOT GOVT'S PROPERTY'

Promoda slams politics around Chamundi

MYSURU, 30 AUG

Mysuru royal family matriarch Pramoda Devi Wadiyar condemned the politicisation of Chamundi Hills, hitting out at both the ruling Congress and Opposition parties alike. She said that the Royal family celebrates Dasara privately and it is for the government to decide who to invite as a chief guest.

Speaking to reporters Mysuru on Saturday, she said that the Chamundi Hills are sacred to Hindus. "It's a religious place. It's a property of Mysuru Palace."

The Mysuru Royal family will continue to protect Chamundi Hills and its properties, she asserted.

The Royal family has been engaged in a legal battle for 70 years with the State government over the family's properties and the constitution of a Srikshetra Chamundeshwari Development Authority.

"Chamundi Hills and Chamundi Temple are not government's property until the Court clarifies this," she said.

She condemned all political parties for using the Chamundi Hills and Chamundeshwari Temple for politics.

"I appeal to all political party leaders to stop politicising the dasara celebrations," she added.

Pramoda Devi Wadiyar *PHOTO: PTI*

The State government's decision to invite International Booker Winning author Banu Mushtaq to felicitate this year's Dasara festival has created a massive controversy, with the BJP and JD(S) claiming that the writer was anti-Hindu and anti-Kannada.

Meanwhile, BJP MLC AH Vishwanath has strayed from the party line and welcomed the State government's decision.

However, he urged the government to also honour Deepa Bhasthi, who won the prize with Mushtaq, in front of Mysuru Palace for their contribution to Kannada. He also hit out at senior party member and Opposition leader R Ashoka for his communal statements. *—Salar News*

Man held for impregnating minor daughter

MYSURU, 30 AUG

A 41-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping and impregnating his 13-year-old daughter at a village in Bettadapura hobli of Periapatna taluk in Mysuru district, police said on Saturday. The matter came to light Friday when the girl was admitted to a hospital after she complained of swelling in her legs, they said.

After a medical examination, the doctors confirmed that the girl was 8 months pregnant. The girl then revealed that her father had been sexually assaulting her over the past one year when no one was at home, police said.

He also threatened to kill her if she revealed it to anyone, a senior police officer said.

The father was then arrested and remanded to judicial custody. A case has been registered under the under the POCSO Act and other relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). *—Salar News*

Cong's Mansoor hits back at EC's 'apologise threats'

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan said that the Election Commission's (EC's) stance on 'Vote Chori' allegations has put the country at the "risk (of) losing what makes us a real democracy".

The EC responded to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's claim that there was a massive electoral fraud in the City's Mahadevapura constituency by asking him to file an affidavit or apologise.

"Asking for basic answers doesn't make someone against India," Khan responded in a video. "It makes them a responsible Indian."

He said that EC's threat-like response to questions have further raised doubts about its credibility.

"When the Election Commission acts defensive or tries to shut people up, public trust falls further," he said. "When rules get weaponised to silence whistleblowers or political rivals, it's not protecting the vote, it's protecting its own image."

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan *PHOTO: SALAR*

Khan added that the EC owed the public a proper response.

"Our democracy is stronger when every Indian feels safe to ask, 'Is my name there? Was my vote counted? Was the process fair?' The authorities owe us answers, not threats," he said. "If we cannot question, we cannot improve. If we cannot improve, we risk losing what makes us a real democracy." *—Salar News*

Guv hails cops, CM calls to protect weak

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot praised the Karnataka Police for its courage, discipline and sacrifice, calling it a leading force in the country, while Chief Minister Siddaramaiah exhorted the police to ensure protection for the weaker sections of society.

While presenting the President's Distinguished Service Medal, President's Commendable Service Medal, and the Union Home Minister's Medal to police officers and personnel at the President's Medal Investiture Ceremony 2025 held at Raj Bhavan on Saturday, the Governor said the awards recognised exemplary service in maintaining peace and security.

Guv Thaawarchand Gehlot, CM Siddaramaiah, HM G Parameshwar and others during President Medal Investiture Ceremony-2025, at Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru on Saturday. *PHOTO: SALAR*

"Karnataka Police.... has rightly earned recognition as the premier police force of the country," he said.

Siddaramaiah, who also attended the event, called on the police to take strong measures against atrocities meted out on persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. He pointed out that conviction rates in such cases remain low compared to other states. *—PTI*

Om Prakash's wife's custody extended

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The City sessions court has extended the judicial custody of Pallavi, wife of slain ex-DGP Om Prakash, in connection with his murder. The court also arranged legal aid for her, ensuring her right to legal representation.

During her virtual court appearance from prison on Friday, Pallavi was informed she lacked legal counsel. She told the bench she was unable to afford a lawyer. The court then offered assistance through the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), which she accepted. Directions were given for the DLSA to appoint an advocate to keep her informed and consult her on case developments.

Vinay Kumar Singh, representing the de facto complainant, filed a vakalat and an application under Section 338(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), seeking permission to assist the prosecution. The court allowed this, permitting him to work with the Special Public Prosecutor during the trial.

Pallavi's judicial custody will continue until the next hearing scheduled for 12 September 2025. On 20 April, the 68-year-old IPS officer was found dead at his HSR Layout residence; his wife was arrested on murder charges filed by their son, Kartikesh. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Stalin embarks on Europe trip to attract investments

CHENNAI, 30 AUG

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Saturday began a week-long visit to Germany and the United Kingdom to secure fresh industrial investments for the state. He said the trip aims to sign new agreements and boost economic growth, with his return set for 8 September.

Since the DMK came to power in 2021, Tamil Nadu has attracted Rs 10.62 lakh crore investments, signed 922 MoUs, and created 32.81 lakh jobs. Stalin highlighted that Tamil Nadu's economic growth hit 11.19 per cent in 2024-25, the highest in 14 years, citing central government data.

He dismissed AIADMK's criticism of his foreign trips and expressed confidence that the DMK alliance will secure a major victory in the 2026 Assembly election. *—PTI*

BRS' KTR detained amid stir against urea shortage

HYDERABAD, 30 AUG

In a dramatic turn, BRS Working President KT Rama Rao (KTR) stepped out of a police detention vehicle and marched to the Telangana Secretariat on Saturday, intensifying his party's clash with the ruling Congress. KTR and several BRS legislators were detained after submitting a petition over fertiliser shortages. During a symbolic "Urea Protest," BRS members held empty fertiliser bags, accusing the Revanth Reddy government of pushing farmers into distress. KTR alleged over 600 farmer suicides, criticised Congress for failing on its "Six Guarantees," and demanded a 15-day assembly session to debate issues from agricultural crises to the Kaleshwaram project.

He vowed that the BRS would hold the government accountable for what he called a collapse of governance. *—AGENCIES*

Dhankhar applies for pension as R'than ex-MLA

JAIPUR, 30 AUG

Former Vice-President of India Jagdeep Dhankhar has applied to restart his Rajasthan MLA pension, officials confirmed. Dhankhar, who represented the Kishangarh Assembly constituency as a Congress MLA from 1993 to 1998, received the benefit until July 2019, when it was stopped after his appointment as Governor of West Bengal. Following his resignation as Vice-President of the country on 21 July, citing health reasons, Dhankhar has approached the Rajasthan Assembly Secretariat to resume payments. The process has begun, and the pension will apply from the date his resignation was accepted. At 74, Dhankhar is entitled to a pension of Rs 42,000 per month. *—PTI*

Arrested TMC MLA sent to jail in WB job scam case

KOLKATA, 30 AUG

A special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court on Saturday remanded TMC MLA Jiban Krishna Saha to 14 days' judicial custody following his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on money laundering charges. Saha, MLA from Burwan in Murshidabad, was arrested on 25 August after ED raids linked to the West Bengal school recruitment scam. The agency alleges he collected huge sums from "undeserving" candidates in exchange for assistant teacher jobs, acting in criminal conspiracy with SSC officials. The ED claims Saha attempted to destroy evidence during searches by throwing his phones into a drain. Assets worth 238 crore have been attached by the probe agency and a chargesheet was filed in April 2024. *—PTI*

Drones must in modern wars, should be part of policy: Rajnath

He says India can't afford to rely on foreign supplies for defence sector

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday emphasised the critical role of drones in modern warfare and the need for India to be self-reliant in its defence capabilities.

Speaking at the inauguration of a defence equipment facility in Noida, Singh highlighted how drones have evolved from surveillance tools to key assets in combat. "Drones are now being deployed in areas where large equipment cannot reach, as seen in the Russia-Ukraine conflict," Singh said, stressing the importance of incorporating drones into India's war policy.

Union Minister for Defence Rajnath Singh addresses a Defence Conclave in New Delhi on Saturday PHOTO: PIB

- "Drones are now being deployed in areas where large equipment cannot reach, as seen in the Russia-Ukraine conflict," Singh said highlighting their use.

He also addressed the country's growing defence self-sufficiency, noting that India has moved from importing drones to designing and manufacturing them domestically. "Many entrepreneurs are contributing to this progress, and no praise is enough for their efforts," he added.

Singh further underlined that India's defence strategy must no longer depend on uncertain foreign supplies. In his address at the NDTV Defence Summit, he emphasised that India's defence architecture should be based on its own capabilities, asserting, "Self-reliance is not protectionism; it is an issue of sovereignty."

The Defence Minister announced plans for the Sudarshan Chakra air defence system, which aims to provide complete aerial security to vital installations across India within the next decade. "The Sudarshan Chakra will include both defensive and offensive elements to tackle enemy threats," Singh explained.

He also revealed that India is set to develop a powerful indigenous aero-engine, with preparations for the project nearing completion.

Singh further noted that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently tested an integrated air defence weapon system, marking a significant step forward in India's defence autonomy."India's policy of self-reliance strengthens our strategic autonomy and prepares us for the future," Singh concluded. *—PTI*

'50 weapons fired by IAF forced Pakistan to heel'

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Indian Air Force (IAF) achieved "complete domination" over Pakistan with fewer than 50 weapons fired during Operation Sindoor, forcing Islamabad to request an end to military hostilities by midday on 10 May, Vice Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Narmdeshwar Tiwari revealed on Saturday.

Speaking at the NDTV Defence Summit, Tiwari explained that the strikes, launched in response to Pakistan's 9-10 May attack, successfully targeted carefully selected military sites in Pakistan. "In less than 50 weapons, we achieved complete domination. Some of these targets weren't even hit in the 1971 war," he said, praising the precision of the operation. India's mission, which began on 7 May focused on terrorist infrastructure across Pakistan-controlled territory. The IAF's strikes were calibrated, with no collateral damage. *—PTI*

'US brand in toilet': Ex-NSA blasts Trump's India tariffs

WASHINGTON, 30 AUG

- Trump raised tariffs to 50% on goods imported from India, blaming what he has called unfair trade practices and the country's import of Russian crude oil. The tariffs would bring India and China closer, Sullivan said.

National Security Adviser (NSA) to former President Joe Biden, Jake Sullivan has slammed into President Donald Trump's hefty tariffs against India, blaming him for tarnishing the reputation of the American brand.

Sullivan also warned that such tariffs make China look "more responsible" than the US.

"China has moved ahead of the United States in popularity in a whole lot of countries, ... China is looking like a more responsible player," Sullivan told Tim Miller on The Bulwark podcast.

Trump raised tariffs to 50% on goods imported from India, blaming what he has called unfair trade practices and the country's import of Russian crude oil.

Reports however suggested that the tariffs were imposed as India denied Trump's claim of mediating in its recent conflict with Pakistan.

Sullivan said the high tariffs would push New Delhi closer to Beijing.

US allies now see Washington as a "big disruptor" that cannot be believed. Global leaders now feel the need for "derisking" from the United States, he said. India and China have come closer for the first time since the Galwan 2020 clashes.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry, who has served under President Barack Obama said that great nations don't necessarily exhibit greatness by giving people ultimatums without sort of a genuine diplomatic effort.

Trump's former aide John Bolton had also slammed the President for jeopardising decades of American efforts to bring India away from Russia and China.

US foreign policy expert Christopher Padilla had also warned that the punitive tariffs imposed on India could raise questions on the reliability of US—*Agencies*

EC gets 2L pleas for removing names from SIR

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Election Commission on Saturday said it has received 1.98 lakh pleas from individuals for exclusion of names from the voters' list being prepared as part of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

Nearly 30,000 pleas were received for inclusion of names.

The draft electoral rolls will remain open for "claims and objections" by individuals and political parties till 1 September.

The final electoral roll for Bihar, which is likely to go for polls in November, will be published on 30 September.

Booth-level agents appointed by political parties have so far filed 25 claims for inclusion and 103 for exclusion from the draft list of Bihar voters.

EC received 30,000 pleas for inclusion of names in SIR. The draft electrol rolls will remain open for claims till 1 September PHOTO: PIB

According to the Election Commission (EC), 99.11 per cent of the 7.24 crore electors of the state have so far submitted their documents for verification.

The Supreme Court has asked the poll panel to accept Aadhaar card or any of the 11 listed documents from people seeking inclusion in the voters' list.

The Election Commission has asked the apex court to repose faith in it on carrying out the Special Intensive Revision in poll-bound Bihar.

SC to hear pleas on extension of deadline

The Supreme Court will hear on 1 September RJD and AIMIM's pleas for extending the deadline to file claims and objections in the SIR of Bihar's electoral rolls.

The counsel for AIMIM said over 80,000 claims were filed before the 22 August order, whereas after the order, around 95,000 claims have been filed so far. *—PTI*

Jarange's talks with government fail to end Maratha quota stir

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

No headway appeared in sight as the talks between Maratha quota agitation leader Manoj Jarange and a government-appointed delegation ended inconclusively in Mumbai on Saturday.

Jarange also slammed Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis for sending former Justice Sandeep Shinde, who heads the committee set up by the state government to expedite the process of granting reservation to the Marathas, to hold parleys with him.

The government deputed the delegation to hold talks with the Maratha leader, who launched the protest on 29 August at Azad Maidan, demanding a 10 per cent quota for Marathas under the OBC category and that they be recognised as Kunbis - an agrarian caste included in the OBC category - which will make them eligible for reservation in government jobs and education.

PHOTO: ANI

He said the committee, which had studied gazettes related to the issue for the past 13 months, must submit its report.

Justice Shinde said it was the job of the backward class commission to give such a report and that the cabinet had given in-principle approval to the Hyderabad Gazette.

Jarange asked the government not to spread misinformation that the Marathas were seeking reservation from the OBC quota.

He further urged CM Fadnavis not to insult poor Marathas, and accused him of trying to create instability and vitiate the atmosphere in the state.

State minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil said the issues raised by the Maratha leader were discussed in detail in the cabinet sub-committee, and the government was committed to resolving them in a positive manner *—PTI*

'Forces in TN stopped Moopanar from being PM'

CHENNAI, 30 AUG

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday alleged that certain forces in Tamil Nadu prevented Tamil Manila Congress founder and late leader G K Moopanar from becoming the Prime Minister when the opportunity arose. She made the remarks after paying floral tributes at Moopanar's memorial in Teynampet, Chennai, on his 24th death anniversary.

Praising Moopanar, Sitharaman recalled his simplicity, honesty and nationalist ideals, saying he was a "respected leader known across the country." Without naming anyone, she said, "We all know which forces blocked Moopanar's elevation. It was one of the greatest betrayals Tamil Nadu has ever seen."

Sitharaman attended the event alongside AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami, DMDK Treasurer Sudheesh, BJP leaders Nainar Nagenthiran and K Annamalai, among others.

Looking ahead to the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, she urged alliance partners to remain united and deliver "good governance," calling it the "best tribute" to Moopanar. *—PTI*

Oppn VP pick Reddy seeks support from BJP top brass

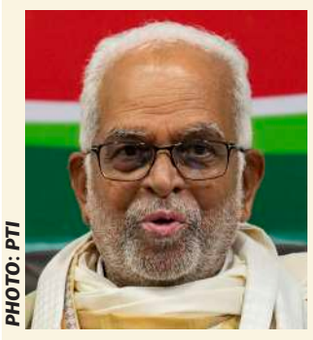


PHOTO: PTI

RANCHI, 30 AUG

- "I have sent letters to all Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha members, asking them to consider my candidature on merit," Reddy said, adding that he was open to discussions with the BJP's top brass.

B Sudershan Reddy, the Opposition's nominee for Vice-President, has called for support from all members of Parliament, regardless of party affiliation, for his candidacy based on merit. Speaking to the press, Reddy expressed his willingness to meet BJP leaders if permitted, stressing that the election should be fair and decent.

"I have sent letters to all Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha members, asking them to consider my candidature on merit," Reddy said, adding that he was open to discussions with the BJP's top brass.

Reddy also questioned the special revision of electoral rolls, asserting that majority rule does not give anyone the right to act unilaterally. Additionally, he criticised the treatment of Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, accusing constitutional functionaries of violating his dignity.

The upcoming vice-presidential election on 9 September will see a direct contest between Reddy and CP Radhakrishnan, the NDA's candidate.

Both the candidates hail from South India, with Radhakrishnan being a BJP veteran leader from Tamil Nadu, and Reddy, a former Supreme Court judge from Telangana. *—PTI*

BACK GST REJIG

Oppn seeks safeguard from GST reform

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Opposition-ruled states have extended their support to cut the number of GST rate slabs and the rates for mass consumption items, while demanding a mechanism to ensure the benefits get passed on to consumers, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said on Saturday.

He also said the Congress hopes that next week's GST Council meeting would not be just a "headline-grabbing exercise so typical of the (Narendra) Modi government".

Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and West Bengal demanded compensation to all states for a period of five years, with 2024-25 as the base year, since their revenues are bound to be adversely impacted by the rate cuts.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

They have demanded additional levies on 'sin' and luxury goods over and above the proposed 40 per cent be fully transferred to states.

The Centre gets 17-18 per cent of its revenue from various cesses that are not shared with the states.

The Congress leader stressed that these demands are perfectly legitimate and are bolstered by recent papers published by the Union Finance Ministry's own National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

The Congress demanded a GST 2.0 that not only reduces rate slabs but also simplifies procedures and compliance requirements.

The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, will meet on 3-4 September to discuss moving to a two-slab taxation.

The council, comprising of finance ministers of all states and Union Territories, besides that of the Centre, will deliberate on the recommendations made on rate rationalisation, compensation cess and health and life insurance. *—PTI*

7.8% GDP growth hardest slap of reality for RaGa: BJP

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The BJP on Saturday said the latest data showing India's economy grew by a stronger-than-expected 7.8 per cent in April-June came as the "hardest slap of reality" for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who recently "declared" India a "dead economy".

Government data released on Friday, the Indian economy's growth by 7.8 per cent was the highest in five quarters before the US tariffs were imposed.

The GDP growth in the first quarter of the ongoing fiscal was mainly due to good performance by the farm sector.

Commenting on the GDP data, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said, "The sweat of the Indian farmers, the hard work of our scientists, and the 140 crore Indians have demonstrated their capabilities."

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is moving forward to fulfil the resolve of a developed India, the minister said.

The only thing "dead" is Rahul Gandhi's credibility, BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya said.

BJP's national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said the Indian economy is "rewriting" global benchmarks.

Gandhi had alleged that the Centre destroyed the country's economic, defence and foreign policies, running India "to the ground". He slammed the Centre after Trump called India a 'dead economy', after levying 25 per cent tariffs on import of Indian goods. *—PTI*

Assam pushed back 33 B'deshi infiltrators: CM

GUWAHATI, 30 AUG

Assam Police have pushed back 33 alleged illegal infiltrators to Bangladesh, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced on Saturday. "Thirty-three new infiltrators have been pushed back to where they belong Bangladesh," Sarma posted on X, warning that the state's drive against illegal migration will intensify further. Although he did not specify the exact sector, most infiltrators are believed to have been sent back through the Sribhumi district border. Sarma said earlier this week that 70–100 infiltrators are being pushed back every week, with over 450 sent back in recent months. The BSF has also heightened security along the 1,885km India-Bangladesh border, while Assam police remain on high alert.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

UP dowry death: Nikki's family seeks justice

NOIDA, 30 AUG

The family of Nikki Bhati, who allegedly died after being set ablaze by her husband and in-laws over dowry demands, has met Gautam Buddh Nagar Police Commissioner Laxmi Singh, seeking swift justice. Nikki's father, Bhikari Singh, said the commissioner assured them that strict action would be taken, a chargesheet filed soon, and the case moved to a fast-track court. Nikki's brother Atul Payla added that the family was promised "no one will be spared." Nikki, 26, married to Vipin Bhati since 2016, suffered severe burns at her in-laws' home in Greater Noida on 21 August and died while being taken to a Delhi hospital. Vipin, his parents, and brother Rohit Bhati have been arrested. —*PTI*

Private firms to restore Delhi monuments

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Delhi government will conserve neglected heritage monuments and develop them into cultural hubs in partnership with businesses, institutions, and local communities. At a heritage preservation conference organised by the Department of Archaeology on Friday, Tourism and Culture Minister Kapil Mishra said many historical structures in Delhi had been ignored for years, but the government was committed to their restoration.Under the 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme, private and community stakeholders will act as 'Monument Mitras' for five years to enhance visitor facilities, promote tourism, and support economic activity. Nearly 75 monuments were restored, with upcoming projects including Bhuli Bhatiyari ka Mahal, Malcha Mahal, Dara Shikoh Library, Hastsal Minar, and Quli Khan's Tomb.—*PTI*

RSS worker's son killed in UP; 3 held

KUSHINAGAR, 30 AUG

The younger son of an RSS office-bearer was brutally killed following a clash over cattle grazing in Semra Hardo village, Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, police said on Saturday. Utkarsh Singh, 40, son of Indrajit Singh, confronted the family of Kanhai Yadav on Friday evening after spotting their cattle in his field. The argument escalated, and Kanhai's four sons allegedly attacked Utkarsh with axes and sticks, inflicting fatal injuries. Utkarsh was rushed to Padrauna Medical College, where doctors declared him dead. Police have arrested three accused Sachchidanand, Srinivas and Devendra Yadav while the fourth, Gyan Yadav, is absconding. An FIR has been filed, and investigations by the police are underway. —*PTI*

J&K struggles to restore normal life amid disasters

Cloudburst and landslides have claimed 130 lives in August

JAMMU, 30 AUG

Jammu and Kashmir, beset by a series of natural calamities in the past fortnight, labours to bring life back on track.

The Union Territory has been reeling under a series of cloudbursts and landslides since 14 August, the latest being a cloudburst and landslide in remote villages of Reasi and Ramban districts on Saturday that claimed 11 lives.

With this the death toll due to natural calamities reached 130 in the state, while 140 were injured.

The pilgrimage to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district remained suspended for the fifth day on Saturday. 34 pilgrims died when a landslide struck about halfway along the trek route from Katra to the shrine on Tuesday.

.Heavy rains across the Jammu region left a trail of devastation, with hundreds of properties damaged and dozens of roads and bridges washed away, forcing the suspension of traffic on key highways, besides paralysing the rail traffic.

The cloudburst in Ramban happened on a hilltop village near the primary school and created a fast-flowing stream through the Drubla-Gudgram village, washing away two residential houses, a cowshed and the school building.

The district administration was extending all possible assistance to the affected families.

A massive landslide triggered by heavy rains hit the Khuni Nallah area in Ramban district, blocking the flow of the Bichalri river. The villages downstream face a threat of flooding.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah appealed to people to remain alert, avoid vulnerable areas, and strictly adhere to safety advisories.

In a post on X, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed his grief on the loss of lives in the cloudburst and landslide in Reasi and Ramban and assured all possible assistance to the affected.

Heavy rains were forecast in Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Reasi, Doda, Samba and Udhampur on Saturday. —*PTI*

Police and rescue teams conduct a search operation at a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district following a cloudburst on Saturday that killed four people **PHOTO: PTI**

Search for missing people on in U'khand amid rains

DEHRADUN, 30 AUG

Following severe rains and cloudbursts in Uttarakhand, rescuers are searching through knee-high debris for the missing. Six deaths and 11 missing persons have been reported across Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Bageshwar, and Tehri districts.

Landslides and breached roads hampered rescue efforts initially, but as weather improves, officials aim to speed up operations. Rudraprayag District Magistrate Prateek Jain stated, "Our focus is to restore road access so heavy machines can clear the rubble," adding that without machinery, reaching those trapped under debris is challenging.

In Punjab's Ferozepur rescue teams have evacuated about 3,000 people from flood-affected villages. —*PTI*

RS 6,300 CR BANK FRAUD

Choksi's bail plea rejected by Belgian court

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

- The court rejected the appeal on strong reasons conveyed by the CBI to the Belgian prosecution that Choksi had escaped from many jurisdictions to evade legal proceedings and may flee to another country if let out on bail. Choski was arrested in Belgium in April.

The bail plea of fugitive diamonds trader Mehul Choksi, wanted in India in connection with over Rs 6,300-crore fraud in the Punjab National Bank (PNB), has again been turned down by a court of appeal in Belgium, just ahead of his extradition hearing before a court in that country.

The court rejected the appeal on strong reasons conveyed by the CBI to the Belgian prosecution that Choksi had escaped from many jurisdictions to evade legal proceedings and may flee to another country if let out on bail.

Choksi was arrested in Belgium in April on the basis of CBI's extradition request.

His earlier bail application was rejected.

Choksi filed another bail application on 22 August, offering to be under house arrest, which was again rejected.

The arguments in the extradition case of Choksi, 66, the owner of Gitanjali Group, will be taken up in a court in Belgium in mid-September.

The CBI will assist the Belgian prosecution in putting forth a strong case to send him back to India to face trial.

Modi has been lodged in a London jail since he was held by the authorities there in 2019.

Choksi is facing cases of criminal conspiracy, cheating and falsification of accounts, besides provisions of Prevention of Corruption which all constitute crimes in Belgium as well.

The CBI has also invoked the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the United Nations Convention against Corruption in its extradition request. —*PTI*

'Denying pay to worker over a new job is injustice'

KOLKATA, 30 AUG

Holding that looking for another job, even if with a rival company with better perks and facilities, is a basic right and does not constitute moral turpitude, the Calcutta High Court has held that non-payment of an employee's dues on such ground by a company was against the principles of natural justice.

Setting aside the order and punishment of the company's disciplinary authority, which claimed to be the sole manufacturer of a particular type of insulator film in India, the court directed it to pay his gratuity dues of Rs 1.37 lakh along with simple interest at the rate of 8 per cent per annum.

The court held that the petitioner company could not prove that any damage or loss to, or destruction of property belonging to the employer was due to any act of the respondent which was riotous, disorderly or involved moral turpitude.

The petition was moved against orders passed by the Appellate Authority, directing payment of the gratuity dues to Sudip Samanta, who worked as a technician in the company.

The high court termed the Appellate Authority's order as well-reasoned and within jurisdiction. —*PTI*

4 more held in Palghar building collapse

PALGHAR, 30 AUG

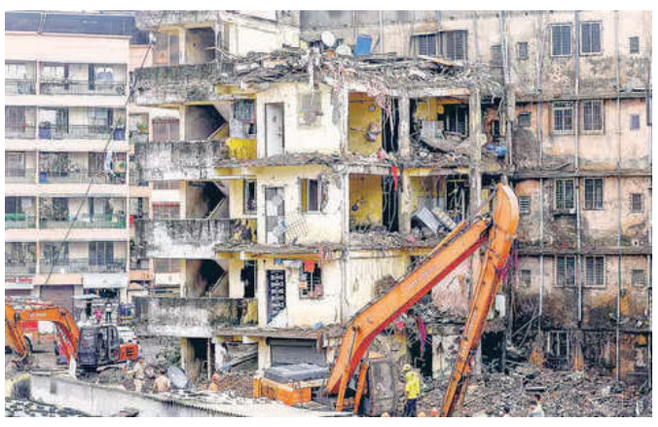
Four more people have been arrested in connection with the building collapse in Maharashtra's Palghar district, which claimed 17 lives earlier this week.

The crime branch of the Mira-Bhayander Vasai-Virar police was probing the incident.

The unauthorised four-storey Ramabai Apartment collapsed onto an adjacent vacant tenement at Vijay Nagar in Virar in Palghar on 27 August.

Senior inspector Shahuraj Ranavre said the crime branch has arrested two women, who owned the land on which the structure was built, and their husbands, who collected rent from the residents.

The police had initially arrested the main accused, Neetal Sane, a builder and developer. With this, five people have been arrested in the case.



Maharashtra Minister Pratap Sarnaik said that residents of the building that collapsed would be provided with temporary accomodation **PHOTO: PTI**

Maharashtra Minister Pratap Sarnaik said that residents of the building would be provided temporary accommodation by MHADA.

Meanwhile, the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) has issued orders to immediately evacuate 37 highly dangerous buildings housing 191 families.

- Senior inspector Shahuraj Ranavre said the crime branch has arrested two women, who owned the land on which the structure was built, and their husbands, who collected rent from the residents. The builder and developer had been arrested.

TMC chief Saurabh Rao issued the order after a review meeting.

Under the C-1 category, Naupada-Kopri ward has maximum of 27 buildings, followed by Utalsar with seven, Diva two and Mumbra one.

The buildings will however, remain in the possession of the residents. —*PTI*

Delhi temple 'sevadaar' beaten to death

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

A 35-year-old 'sevadaar' in southeast Delhi's Kalkaji temple was allegedly beaten to death in public after an argument took a violent turn.

One of the accused, Atul Pandey, a resident of Dakshinpuri, the DCP added that he was caught on the spot by the locals and handed over to the police.

The argument broke out on the morning of 29 August after the accused, who were visiting the temple, demanded 'chunni-prasad' — a combination of a sacred headscarf and a religious offering of food — from the 'sevadaar', Yogendra Singh, a native of Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh.

Sevadaar Yogendra Singh was attacked after he was unable to serve the accused with 'chunni-prasad' at the kalkaji temple **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

The altercation turned violent as the group of 10-15 men allegedly dealt fist blows to Singh and beat him up with sticks.

Singh was rushed to the AIIMS Trauma Centre, where he succumbed to his injuries.

A case was registered at the Kalkaji Police Station. —*PTI*

Kerala CM to inaugurate Onam fiesta on 3 Sept

T'PURAM, 30 AUG

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate the state-level Onam celebrations at the Nishagandhi open-air auditorium in Thiruvananthapuram on 3 September, General Education Minister V Sivankutty announced on Saturday.

The week-long festivities, organised by the state government, will run until 9 September, featuring traditional art forms, modern performances, music, dance, visual feasts, and martial arts.

Over 33 venues in and around the capital will host events, with thousands of artists participating.

Malayalam actor-director Basil Joseph and Tamil actor Jayam Ravi will be the chief guests at the inaugural ceremony. A musical night will follow the launch, and the entire city will be illuminated during the celebrations.

The festivities will conclude with a grand cultural procession on 9 September. In other districts, Onam events will be organised by the Tourism Department and local administrations. The auspicious Thiruonam falls on 5 September. —*PTI*

ROW OVER FOOD CHOICES

Workers protest after Kochi bank bans beef

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Employees of a branch of the Canara Bank in Kerala's Kochi served beef to oppose an alleged ban on the meat in the bank's office and canteen.

Protesters alleged that the regional manager of the branch, who hailed from Bihar and recently took charge in Kerala, had ordered a ban on beef in bank's canteens.

The Bank Employees Federation of India (BEFI) had initially launched the protest against alleged mental harassment and misbehaviour meted out towards bank officials by the manager. However,, the federation redirected the protest to highlight the ban on beef, saying eating a particular food was a personal choice of the employees.

"Beef is served on select days in the bank canteen. The manager banned it. This bank functions according to the guidelines of the Constitution. Food is a personal choice. In India, every individual has the right to choose their food. This is our way of protesting," said federation leader SS Anil.

Political leaders of the state also extended their support to the protest. —*PTI*

Employees of the Canara Bank consuming beef in the canteen to oppose the ban **PHOTO: ANI**

Odisha migrant worker cracks NEET

BERHAMPUR, 30 AUG

Subham Sabar, a 19-year-old from Odisha's Khurda district, has fulfilled his dream of becoming a doctor after cracking the NEET UG exam and securing admission to MKCG Medical College. Coming from a poor family in Mudulidhiah village, he worked as a labourer in Bengaluru to support his family.

His teacher, Basudev Moharana, called to inform him of his success, saying, "It was like a dream come true. I could not hold my tears." Sabar ranked 18,212 in the Scheduled Tribe category.

During three months working at a construction site in Bengaluru, he earned Rs 45,000 and saved Rs 25,000. He explained, "There was no alternative but to support my family." Initially aspiring to be a police officer, he shifted focus to medicine after preparing for higher studies.

Subham Sabar **PHOTO: ANI**

His parents, Sahadeb and Rangi, hope the government will support him financially to complete his five-year course. "His hard work guaranteed the success," said Rangi. —*PTI*

MODI'S GIFT TO ISHIBA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted his Japanese counterpart Shigeru Ishiba large brown ramen bowls made of moonstone with four smaller ones and silver chopsticks during his visit to the country. Officials said the vintage precious stone bowls set with silver chopsticks are a blend of Indian artistry and Japanese culinary tradition. The moonstone, sourced from Andhra Pradesh, glows with adularescence and symbolises love, balance, and protection, while the base of the main bowl is makrana marble inlaid with semi-precious stones in the traditional parchin kari style of Rajasthan
PHOTO: PTI

IAF falling behind amid shortage of fighter jets

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has garnered global scrutiny following India's military conflict with Pakistan in May
PHOTO: PTI

After decades of service, India is retiring the last of its 1950s-era MiG-21 jets. But New Delhi's dream of buying new planes and building a sleek and modern air force has grown into a procurement nightmare.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has garnered global scrutiny following India's military conflict with Pakistan in May. While Indian generals trumpeted the air force's role in targeting what New Delhi said was terror infrastructure in Pakistan, they also admitted "losses" during the clashes.

This controversy has renewed the discussion on the systemic challenges plaguing the IAF for decades, such as outdated aircraft, shortage of pilots and lack of training resources combined with overdue deliveries and delayed defense deals.

But the most glaring problem facing the IAF is its shrinking fighter squadron strength.

A squadron size in military aviation varies depending on the country but generally ranges between 18 and 24 aircraft. With India due to retire its Soviet-developed MiG-21 planes in September, the IAF will have only 29 squadrons at its disposal — the lowest number ever and way below the sanctioned strength of 42.

The MiG-21, originally developed in the 1950s, was India's first supersonic fighter jet and was long seen as a crown jewel in India's aerial fleet. But the legacy of MiG- 21 was also overcast by hundreds of crashes — including numerous fatal ones — which led to the aircraft being dubbed a "flying coffin."

India's military has intended to replenish the outdated jet with an indigenously manufactured Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), but its defense industry has been slow to deliver.

WAR THREAT HAS INDIA COMPARE CAPACITIES

India's Air Chief Marshal AP Singh said in February that the IAF needs to induct 35-40 fighter planes every year to fill its capacity shortfall.

Last week, India's Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi warned that the country's "next war… may happen soon."

The country has had decades of clashes with Pakistan and is increasingly colliding with China on the global stage, with serving and former Indian air force officials telling DW that the shortage of planes needs to be addressed on a "war footing."

With the retirement of MiG-21, the IAF's squadron strength will come close to the Pakistan Air Force's (PAF) 25 squadrons and way below the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force's (PLAFF) 66 squadrons, according to media reports. In other words, India will now have 522 jets as opposed to China's approximately 1,200 fighter jets and Pakistan's 450.

INDIA LOOKS TO RENEW FIGHTER STRENGTH

In recent years, New Delhi has launched a push to modernize its armed forces with a key focus on self-reliance, but this push has been plagued by massive delays.

India remains the second-largest arms importer in the world, topped only by Ukraine. The IAF currently has seven different fighter aircraft types in its fleet, including three of Soviet and Russian origin, two designed solely by French companies, one of British and French make and a sole indigenous one — the HAL Tejas.

Last week, the Indian government gave the green signal to a mammoth deal worth around $7.2 billion to acquire 97 Tejas Mark 1A fighters in place of the MiG-21s.

The indigenous project has now spanned over 40 years but only 38 Tejas MK1A fighters have been inducted into the IAF so far.

Last week's major deal comes on top of a 2021 order of 83 jets. This order remains unfulfilled.

Tejas planes need imported engines

HAL has attributed the stalled timeline for the delivery of the fighters to the delay in the supply of engines from their US partner GE aerospace.

Experts have also raised worries that by the time the last Tejas Mark 1A is inducted into the IAF, it will already be outdated.

INDIA STILL SHOPPING ABROAD FOR NEW JETS

Apart from the indigenous programs, India has also been hoping to buy 114 advanced multi-role fighter aircraft (MRFA) from abroad, in what was originally labeled as a global tender.

But that project too has seen excessive delays.

STARTING WITH A NEW PLAN

Some analysts say that the biggest challenge faced by the IAF is actually poor planning, with many voices calling for a new organization that would focus on the issue.

Other experts argue that the private sector has to get involved in defense production.

WILL TARIFFS AFFECT INDIA'S DEFENSE?

The US has recently pledged to ramp up tariff on Indian goods to 50% as President Donald Trump seeks to punish the South Asian nation over its purchases of Russian oil and unwillingness to accept Washington's terms on trade.

The dispute, however, could create shockwaves far beyond commerce.

Russia is India's biggest defense partner, but New Delhi and Washington have also deepened their defense ties in recent years.

The IAF chief said at the time that India would need to analyze the stealth fighters and they haven't given it a thought.

The latest tariff threat has sparked rumors that India will not be buying the F-35s due to deteriorating ties. New Delhi is yet to confirm or deny these claims. *—DW News*

SALAR

Smooth sounding names can bias hiring decisions: Study

Imagine you're hiring someone for a job that requires a very kind, agreeable and cooperative person. You have two candidates, and all you know about them are their names: Renee and Greta.

Who do you think would be a better fit?

If you are like the people in our recent study on hiring judgments, you probably chose Renee. We found that smoother-sounding names like Renee were preferred to harsher-sounding names like Greta for certain kinds of jobs.

The idea that the sound of a word can make it a better fit for particular meanings or qualities is known as sound symbolism. And it suggests that even something as small as the phonemes in a name can carry surprising weight in how people are judged.

THE POWER OF SOUND SYMBOLISM

The best-known example of sound symbolism is the bouba/kiki effect.

Across languages and cultures, people tend to match the made-up word "bouba" with round shapes and "kiki" with spiky ones.

Why this happens is still debated. Various explanations exist, including the physical sensation of pronouncing the words or the way the sounds of the words imitate the features of round versus spiky objects.

Several years ago, we tested whether the bouba/kiki effect extended beyond invented words to real first names. In one part of that study, we showed participants silhouettes that were either round or spiky and asked them to match them with names.

Not only do people associate names like Bob with round silhouettes and Kirk with spiky silhouettes, but people also associate these names with different personality traits.

Smoother-sounding names like Liam or Noelle were judged as more agreeable and emotional, while spikier-sounding names like Tate or Krista were judged as more extroverted.

In fact, when our study looked at the personalities of more than 1,000 people, we didn't find any sign that these patterns existed in the real world. Nevertheless, people still make associations based on the sounds of names.

NAMES AND HIRING DECISIONS

In our latest study, we were curious to see how these associations might affect judgments in a real-world context: hiring. Of course, employers usually have much more to go on than a name, but there are many instances in which candidates are screened based on only limited information.

There is also a great deal of evidence that socio-demographic cues in a name — such as race and age — can affect who gets a callback. The sound of a name itself could be another potential source of bias.

We designed job ads that looked for a candidate high in one of six personality factors: honesty-humility, emotionality, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness (how organised or hard-working someone is) and openness to experience.

For example, one ad looking for an agreeable candidate read:

An organisation is looking to hire a new employee. The ideal applicant for this job should be:

1) Co-operative
2) Peaceful
3) Not aggressive

A sample of adults recruited online was then given a pair of names and asked to decide who sounded like a better fit for the job. One name in the pair contained what are called "sonorant" consonants (l, m, n) that sound especially smooth and continuous.

The other contained what are called "voiceless stops" (p, t, k) that sound especially abrupt. For example, they might have to choose between Liam and Tate.

The people in our study made decisions for many different pairs of names, and the overall finding across three experiments was that smoother-sounding names, like Liam and Noelle, were judged as better fits for jobs looking for someone high in honesty-humility, emotionality, agreeableness and openness.

WHEN MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

We also tested what happens when additional information is introduced. For example, what if participants saw Liam in a picture or watched a video of him answering questions about himself?

We found that when people saw pictures of candidates (randomly paired with names), the influence of name sound decreased. When people saw a videotaped interview of the job candidates, the sound of a name no longer had an effect on their judgments of personality. We also asked participants how well a given name fit the job candidate in the video. When people felt a name suited a candidate — regardless of sound — that candidate was judged more positively on almost every measure, including warmth and competence. In other words, there seems to be a benefit of having a name that fits, even though it's not yet known why some people's names seem to suit them better than others.

Taken together, these results show the sound of a name might be one additional source of bias in hiring decisions. When people don't have a lot of details about a candidate, it seems that there is much in a name. *—PTI*

The idea that the sound of a word can make it a better fit for particular meanings or qualities is known as sound symbolism
PHOTO: FREEPIK

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Jarange: The lanky activist who took on heavyweights for Maratha quota

Always seen in white clothes and sporting a saffron scarf, this lanky activist's aggressive posture and challenge to political heavyweights has made parties wary of him
PHOTO: PTI

Coming from a humble farming background in a Maharashtra village to working in a hotel and a sugar factory before becoming the face of the Maratha reservation agitation, 43-year-old Manoj Jarange has come a long way.

As Jarange began his yet another round of indefinite fast on Friday - his seventh since 2023 and touted as the community's final fight to get reservation - a large number of Marathas gathered at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai, the venue of the protest, to show solidarity for the activist, whom they virtually revere as a hero.

His fight for the Maratha cause has earlier forced the government and the ruling parties to take note of his demands and send their representatives for talks due to fear of facing a backlash.

Always seen in white clothes and sporting a saffron scarf, this lanky activist's aggressive posture and challenge to political heavyweights has made parties wary of him.

People known to him say he was a Congress activist for a brief period before quitting active politics and launching agitations for farmers and the Marathas, a politically influential community that constitutes around 30 per cent of the state's population.

Till two years ago, Manoj Jarange was not a known name. When he started his indefinite hunger strike to demand quota for Marathas in his Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district on August 29, 2023, it largely went unnoticed.

However, everything changed in a matter of three days after violence broke out on September 1 when local authorities forcibly tried to admit Jarange to a hospital.

The subsequent chain of events threw up a huge challenge before the then 14-month-old Eknath Shinde-led government as the Opposition gunned for the then Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who held the home portfolio, and sought his resignation for the police action against Jarange's supporters and pro-Maratha quota protesters.

Police baton-charged and lobbed tear gas shells to disperse the protesters as they refused to let authorities shift Jarange to a hospital. Several persons, including 40 police personnel, were injured and more than 15 state transport buses set ablaze in the violence.

The protest and the subsequent police action catapulted Jarange into prominence and forced the Shiv Sena-BJP-NCP government to once again start talking about reservation for Marathas in education and jobs, an emotive issue which is now caught in legal tangle.

Jarange hails from Matori, a small village in Beed district of central Maharashtra. He completed his school education there. After spending some initial years in the village, he moved to Shahgad in Ambad tehsil of Jalna district, where he worked in a hotel, Rajendra Kale, a journalist based in Matori, told PTI earlier.

Later, he got a job in a sugar factory at Ambad from where he joined politics, he said, adding that Jarange's wife and children live in Shahgad.

Jarange played a key role in getting compensation from the government for the families of those who lost their lives during the Maratha reservation agitation earlier, Kale said.

"While working for the Congress party, he became the district president of the Youth Congress around 2000. However, due to the ideological differences over some political issues, he left the Congress and started working for a Maratha community organisation," said Prof Chandrakant Bharat, co-ordinator of the Maratha Kranti Morcha (MKM), one of the outfits that has been agitating for quota to the community.

Around 2011, Jarange formed an organisation named 'Shivba Sanghatana', he said.

Jarange's agitations are not limited to the Maratha quota issue alone. He also took up issues related to farmers. In 2013, he launched an agitation for the demand to release water from the Jayakwadi dam for the cultivators in Jalna, Bharat added.

"He was actively involved in the pro-Maratha quota marches that were taken out in 2016 across the state and took community members from Marathwada in central Maharashtra to Mumbai to put forward their demands before the then-BJP government led by Devendra Fadnavis," the MKM functionary said.

Jarange's agitation in Sashti Pimpalgaon of Jalna district lasted for nearly 90 days, Bharat said.

Anil Maharaj Jarange, a relative of Manoj Jarange, said the activist left Matori village around 2005.

His father Raosaheb and mother Prabhabai still reside in Matori. His elder brothers Jagannath and Kakasaheb also live there and do farming, he said.

Jarange has been demanding a 10 per cent quota for Marathas under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. He wants all Marathas to be recognised as Kunbis – an agrarian caste included in the OBC category – which will make them eligible for reservation in government jobs and education. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Pak floods kill 30 more as thousands are displaced

LAHORE, 3 AUG

At least 30 people died in the last 24 hours on Saturday as a historic flood caused massive devastation in Pakistan's Punjab province, prompting the authorities to deploy explosives and breach embankments to protect cities from the rains. Torrential rains since Saturday morning in major cities of Punjab province added to the misery of the people, especially the flood-affected ones, and the situation is likely to worsen as there is a forecast for heavy downpours till 2 September. Pakistan's most populous province, Punjab has been reeling under severe floods for almost a week and at least 1,700 villages across the province are inundated. About 842 people have died in rain-related incidents since 26 June. *—PTI*

Balochistan extends ban on public gatherings

QUETTA, 30 AUG

The Balochistan government has extended Section 144 across the province for another 15 days, from 31 August to 14 September, citing ongoing law and order issues. The restrictions ban weapons, pillion riding, vehicles with tinted glass, unregistered bikes, and public gatherings of five or more people. The notification also prohibits wearing mufflers or masks in public to prevent identification. This is the third extension, initially imposed on 1 August and extended on 16 August. The move follows claims by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), which has claimed responsibility for recent attacks on Pakistani security forces, including IED blasts that killed six soldiers in Panjgur and Kachi. BLA spokesperson Jeeyand Baloch warned residents aiding the military to cease activities, or face consequences. *—ANI*

Amnesty criticises China for Muslims' 'persecution'

BEIJING, 30 AUG

Amnesty International has renewed its alarm over ongoing repression of Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, three years after the UN OHCHR's landmark 2022 report concluded that serious human rights violations there "may constitute... crimes against humanity." The organisation documented China's systematic campaign of mass detention, torture, and persecution of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Muslim minorities. Amnesty criticised the international community's failure to act, with China evading accountability. Sarah Brooks, Amnesty's China Director, said, "It is shameful that the international community has failed to act." The organisation's 'Free Xinjiang Detainees' campaign reports ongoing suffering, with families torn apart and lives destroyed. *—ANI*

Court says Trump's tariffs illegal, but lets them be

Tariffs will remain until 14 Oct to give govt time to move SC

WASHINGTON, 30 AUG

A federal appeals court ruled Friday that President Donald Trump had no legal right to impose sweeping tariffs on almost every country on earth but left in place for now his effort to build a protectionist wall around the American economy.

The US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled Trump wasn't legally allowed to declare national emergencies and impose import taxes on almost every country on earth, a ruling that largely upheld a May decision by a specialised federal trade court in New York.

"It seems unlikely that Congress intended to ... grant the President unlimited authority to impose tariffs," the judges wrote in a 7-4 ruling.

But they did not strike down the tariffs immediately, allowing his administration time to appeal to the Supreme Court. The tariffs will remain in place through 14 October.

The President vowed to do just that.

"If allowed to stand, this Decision would literally destroy the United States of America," Trump wrote on Truth Social after the ruling.

"It would be 1929 all over again, a GREAT DEPRESSION!" Trump had earlier said on Truth Social.

White House spokesman Kush Desai said Trump had acted lawfully, and "we look forward to ultimate victory on this matter."

The appeals court ruling stems from two cases — one brought by five small US businesses and the other by 12 Democratic-led US states, which argued that International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) does not authorise tariffs.

The court's decision centres on the tariffs Trump slapped in April on almost all US trading partners and levies he imposed before that on China, Mexico and Canada.

However, the court challenge does not cover other Trump tariffs, including levies on foreign steel, aluminium and autos that the president imposed after Commerce Department investigations concluded that those imports were threats to US national security. *—PTI*

President Donald Trump vowed to challenge the verdict in the Supreme Court, where three of the judges are his own appointees **PHOTO: PTI**

'TRUMP IS DEAD' TRENDS ON X

WASHINGTON, 30 AUG

The phrase "Trump is dead" began trending on X on Saturday, with thousands of posts speculating about the President's health. The trend comes shortly after Vice President JD Vance had said he was ready to takeover tragedy struck and after Trump was seen with a bruised hand during his recent White House meeting with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung.

X users also claimed that Trump had not been seen for several days – despite him posting on Truth Social – and had skipped a Cabinet meeting.

The White House had dismissed concerns over Trump's bruised hand, saying that it was due to frequent handshakes and aspirin. Trump, notably, is the oldest American President to take office.

Several X users also claimed that the White House flag was flying at half-mast, something they took to be a sign of tragedy. However, the flag was flown at half-mast due to the Minneapolis mass shooting. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Now, Missouri to redraw maps for GOP elections

Republican Gov. Mike Kehoe said Friday that he is calling Missouri lawmakers into a special session to redraw the state's US House districts as part of a growing national battle between Republicans and Democrats. Earlier Republican-led Texas redrew its map, prompting Democratic-led California to begin doing the same. Trump lauded Kehoe's move.

Don cancels $679M for offshore wind projects

The Transportation Department on Friday cancelled USD 679 million in federal funding for a dozen offshore wind projects. Funding for projects in 11 states was rescinded, including USD 435 million for a floating wind farm in Northern California and USD47 million to boost an offshore wind project in Maryland that the Interior Department has pledged to cancel.

States to remove references to LGBTQ+

Trump's administration told 40 states to eliminate lessons that focus on LGBTQ+ issues from federally funded sexual education materials or they will lose funding. "Federal funds will not be used to poison the minds of the next generation or advance dangerous ideological agendas," Acting Assistant Health and Human Service Secretary Andrew Gradison said.

AHEAD OF UN ASSEMBLY

US cancels visas of Palestine Prez, 80 other officials

WASHINGTON, 29 AUG

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has revoked the visas of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and 80 other officials ahead of next month's annual high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly.

The move is the latest in a series of steps the Trump administration has taken to target Palestinians with visa restrictions and comes as the Israeli military declared Gaza's largest city a combat zone. The State Department also suspended a program that had allowed injured Palestinian children from Gaza to come to the US for medical treatment after a social media outcry by some conservatives.

25 people were killed by Israel in Gaza on Saturday

The department said in a statement earlier that Rubio also ordered visa applications from Palestinian officials, including those tied to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, be denied.

ISRAEL TO SLOW AID TO GAZA

Israel will soon slow or halt humanitarian aid into parts of northern Gaza as it expands its offensive attempting, an official said.

Israel will stop airdrops over Gaza City in the coming days and reduce the arrival of aid trucks into the northern part of the strip as it prepares to evacuate hundreds of thousands of residents south. *—PTI*

LULA IN 'NO RUSH' ON US SANCTION

BRASILIA, 30 AUG

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said he is "in no rush" to impose retaliatory tariffs on the US and reiterated his call for American President Donald Trump to engage in trade negotiations.

Brazil faces 50 per cent tariffs on all exports to the US, the highest of any country barring India. While Brazil has not yet responded in kind, its Chamber of Foreign Commerce (CAMEX) began exploring whether countermeasures could be applied under local law.

"This is a process that takes a bit of time," Lula said on Friday. "We have to tell the United States that we also have actions we can take against them. But I am in no rush. What I want is to negotiate."

Lula said that Brazil is open to negotiations with the US but will not compromise its sovereignty and that "Brazil doesn't need to bow its head to the US".

Since 1 August, the US has imposed the tariffs as part of Trump's pressure campaign over the trial of former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro, who is accused staging a coup. *—ANI*

Putin opposes Western sanctions, says they hinder BRICS

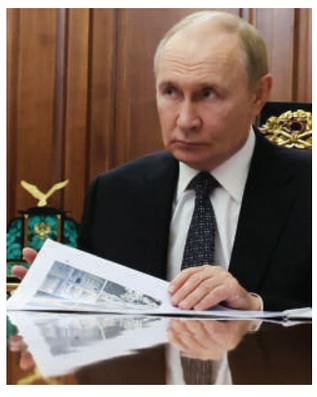
MOSCOW, 30 AUG

Russian President Vladimir Putin has strongly criticised the "discriminatory" sanctions imposed by the US and European Union amid the Ukraine conflict. In an interview with Xinhua News Agency before the SCO Summit, Putin said Russia and China share a united stance against such measures, which hinder global development.

He highlighted that relations between Moscow and Beijing are at an "unprecedented level," with bilateral trade increasing by about USD 100 billion since 2021. "In terms of trade volume, China is by far Russia's leading partner, while last year Russia ranked fifth among China's foreign trade partners," Putin added.

He noted most transactions are in rubles and yuan.

Putin reaffirmed China as Russia's primary importer of oil and gas and said both nations are working to reduce trade barriers. He expressed hope the SCO summit would strengthen its capacity to address global challenges and promote a "fairer, multipolar world order," with the UN playing a central role.



Russian President Vladimir Putin **PHOTO: PTI**

- The comments come ahead of the SCO summit in China, where Putin will meet BRICS partners Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese Premier Xi Jinping

Putin will attend the summit in Tianjin on 31 August and 1 September. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also participate, holding bilateral meetings with Xi Jinping and Putin. *—ANI*

Zelenskyy seeks talks with Trump, EU leaders

KYIV, 30 AUG

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Ukrainian officials want to meet with US President Donald Trump and European leaders next week to discuss recent developments in efforts to end the three-year war with Russia.

The proposed meetings appeared designed to add momentum to the push for peace, as Zelenskyy expressed frustration with what he called Russia's lack of constructive engagement in the process while it continues to launch devastating aerial attacks on civilian areas.

Zelenskyy told reporters in Kyiv on Friday that he expected "several meetings at different venues" with European leaders next week.

Ukrainian negotiators have been trying to move the peace process forward in talks in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland and the United States, he said.

The war continued on, as Russia launched a massive overnight attack on Ukraine, killing at least on person in Zaporizhia and injuring 24 others. Meanwhile, Ukraine destroyed two more oil refineries in Russia.

Russia launched nearly 540 drones, 8 ballistic missiles, and 37 other types targeting civilian areas. *—PTI*

Three killed as Indonesian protests escalate

JAKARTA, 30 AUG

Violence broke out across Indonesia as protests over lawmakers' hefty housing allowances intensified, with clashes turning deadly in Makassar. An angry mob set fire to the provincial parliament building, resulting in at least three deaths and five injuries from burns and falls. Rescuers recovered the bodies early Saturday. Similar unrest occurred in Bandung, West Java, where protesters also set fire to a regional parliament, though no casualties were reported. In Surabaya, demonstrators stormed police headquarters amid violent clashes, prompting police to fire tear gas and water cannons.

The protests started in Jakarta five days ago, driven by outrage over lawmakers' monthly allowance of 50 million rupiah (£3,075), nearly ten times the minimum wage, amid rising living costs. The unrest worsened following the death of 21-year-old ride-hailing driver Affan Kurniawan, who was reportedly struck by a police vehicle during a rally. The incident sparked widespread anger, with clashes occurring in multiple cities, including Medan, Solo, and Yogyakarta.

By Thursday, police had detained around 951 protesters in Jakarta, with at least 25 officers hospitalised. Amnesty International criticised the crackdown, urging authorities to respect free speech and release those detained for peaceful protests. Seven police officers linked to Kurniawan's death have been detained. *—PTI*

People attack the police during a protest after a delivery agent was run over by a police envoy during a student protest against lawmakers' allowances, in Medan, Indonesia **PHOTO: PTI**

INTERNATIONAL TRAGEDY

USAID cuts leave Boko Haram victims with no schools

MAIDUGURI, 30 AUG

Israel Peter was 6 years old when Boko Haram Islamic extremists attacked his village in northeastern Nigeria and his family fled. Eight years later, he still hasn't returned to school.

A rare opportunity to change that disappeared this year, when a nonprofit offering free education to Boko Haram victims rejected Peter's application. It cited the abrupt loss of US funding as the Trump administration dismantled the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

"Now my future will not be great," said Peter, who dreams of being an engineer. He spends his days helping out at his father's small farm. They cannot afford to pay school fees.

Internally displaced Chadian women, who fled Boko Haram threats **PHOTO: UNITED NATIONS**

The school run by the Future Prowess Islamic Foundation has benefited 3,000 children in Borno state, the epicentre of the 16-year conflict with Boko Haram that has displaced and orphaned many.

Boko Haram, which wants to establish Islamic law in the region, forbids Western education and rose to global prominence after its mass abductions of students.

More than 35,000 people have been killed and 2.6 million others displaced in parts of Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad in one of the world's longest-running conflicts.

With US funding gone, the school has let go of 700 of its 2,200 students as well as 20 teachers, officials said, with no new enrolment and further cuts likely.

Millions of people in the region have relied heavily on aid groups and foreign partners to survive. USAID had funded a range of projects, from healthcare to education and social welfare, disbursing USD 1.5 billion to Nigeria between 2023 and 2024. Now, only a few projects like PEPFAR survive. Other funders like Britain have been pulling back, too, citing pressing financial needs at home.

With more children out of the education system, school officials and aid groups worry that children they can no longer support might end up being welcomed by the extremists. *—PTI*

Sikh man waving machete shot dead by LA police

LOS ANGELES, 30 AUG

A 35-year-old Sikh man, Gurpreet Singh, died on 17 July after being shot by Los Angeles Police during a chaotic incident in Arcadia. Singh, who was seen waving a 27-inch machete on the street, charged at officers following a car chase on 13 July.

The LAPD released a detailed video showing Singh waving the machete towards pedestrians and vehicles, even gesturing to cut his tongue. Officers issued multiple commands for Singh to drop the weapon, but he did not comply. He then threw a water bottle at the officers and drove erratically, colliding with a police vehicle.

Singh eventually stopped his car, exited armed with the machete, and charged at officers. They fired at him as he advanced, hitting him multiple times. He was transported to the hospital but died three days later from his injuries.

The 36-year-old man wielded a 'khanda,' a traditional double-edged sword **PHOTO: X**

The recovered machete was two feet long. Officers involved, Michael Orozco and Nestor Espinoza Bojorquez, are under investigation.

The LAPD said it will review whether their tactics met departmental standards. *—PTI*

India & China's trade deficit widens to $99.2B

Modi says India and China has to work together to bring stability to the world economic order

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The bilateral trade between India and China has been growing at a healthy rate, but the trade gap remains sharply tilted in Beijing's favour.

India has time and again flagged its concern over the ballooning trade deficit and the non-trade barriers faced by Indian goods in the Chinese market.

On 29 August, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it is important for India and China to work together to bring stability to the world economic order as he asserted that New Delhi is ready to advance bilateral ties from a strategic and long-term perspective based on mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity.

A list of questions and answers (Q&As) to understand the trade-related issues between the two countries:

Q: BILATERAL TRADE BETWEEN INDIA-CHINA

During April-July 2025-26, India's exports rose by 19.97 per cent to $5.75 billion, while imports increased by 13.06 per cent to $40.65 billion. In 2024-2025, India's exports stood at $14.25 billion, while imports were $113.5 billion.

Trade deficit (difference between imports and exports) rose from $1.1 billion in 2003-04 to $99.2 billion in 2024-25. China's trade deficit accounted for about 35 per cent of India's total trade imbalance in the last fiscal. The gap was $85.1 billion in 2023-2024.

Q: WHY IS DEFICIT A CONCERN?

Because it is not only large, but also structural. What makes it more serious is that China now dominates India's import baskets across virtually every industrial category -- from pharmaceuticals and electronics to construction materials, renewable energy, and consumer goods , according to GTRI.

Trade deficit rose from $1.1 billion in 2003-04 to $99.2 billion in 2024-2025

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Q: PRODUCTS WITH 75 PER CENT SHARES

GTRI analysis states that in antibiotics like erythromycin, China supplies 97.7 per cent of India's needs; in electronics, it controls 96.8 per cent of silicon wafers and 86 per cent of flat panel displays; in renewable energy, 82.7 per cent of solar cells and 75.2 per cent of lithium-ion batteries come from China.

Even everyday products such as laptops (80.5 per cent share), embroidery machinery (91.4 per cent), and viscose yarn (98.9 per cent) are overwhelmingly Chinese-sourced.

Q: THE RISK OF INCREASING RELIANCE

GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava says overwhelming dominance gives Beijing potential leverage against India, turning supply chains into a tool of pressure in times of political tension.

The imbalance is deepening as India's exports to China continue to decline, reducing India's share in bilateral trade to just 11.2 per cent today from 42.3 per cent two decades ago.

However, according to the commerce ministry, most of the goods imported from China are raw materials, intermediate products and capital goods like auto components, electronic parts, mobile phone parts, machinery and active pharma ingredients. These are used for making finished products, which are also exported.

Q: STEPS TO TAKE TO CUT RELIANCE

Introduction of production linked incentive schemes for over 14 sectors to boost domestic manufacturing; stricter quality standards and measures for quality controls, testing protocols, and mandatory certification to check substandard and poor-quality products in the market and protect consumers' interest.

The government encourages Indian business establishments to explore alternative suppliers to diversify their supply chains and reduce dependency on single sources of supply.

It also monitors the surge in imports on a regular basis and takes appropriate action. India has imposed anti-dumping duties on a number of Chinese goods and sectors to protect domestic firms from cheap imports.

Q: IMPACT OF RISING TRADE DEFICIT

Pressure on foreign exchange reserves, dependence on external suppliers, cheaper imports can hurt local manufacturers; can lead to currency depreciation pushing cost of imported goods, fuelling inflation; and over-reliance on imports reduces incentives for building domestic capacity in key sectors, slowing long-term industrial growth. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/ATHER

Ather unveils new 2W platform for e-scooters

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Ather Energy on Saturday unveiled a new electric scooter platform designed for versatility, scalability, and cost efficiency, enabling the company to develop multiple models across segments. The launch also introduced AtherStack 7.0, an upgraded software suite offering AI-powered voice controls, live location sharing, pothole and crash reporting, and tyre pressure monitoring. The platform features a redesigned chassis, powertrain, and electronics stack, allowing 15 per cent faster assembly, 2X quicker servicing, & extended 10,000km service intervals. Key highlights include Advanced Electronic Braking System, a 6 kW fast charger adding 30km range in 10 minutes, and updated 2025 Ather 450 Apex with advanced cruise control. *—PTI*

Govt to study building height curbs near airports

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The government will carry out study with the assistance of global aviation body ICAO to look into solutions that can address issues related to height restrictions for buildings around airports, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said on Saturday. Asserting that aviation safety is the top priority and will not be compromised, the minister also said the government plans to develop aerotropolises or cities developed around airports. India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation. While real estate development is gaining momentum, height restrictions are in place for buildings around airports to ensure safe flight operations. The government aims to establish 50 new airports in the next five years, Naidu said. *—PTI*

IOC to invest Rs 1.66 lakh cr for biz expansion

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Indian Oil Corporation will invest Rs 1.66 lakh crore over five years to expand in refining, fuel marketing, petrochemicals, natural gas and renewables. Chairman Arvinder Singh Sahney stated refinery capacity will rise from 80.75 to 98.4 million tonnes by 2028, with major upgrades at Panipat, Gujarat and Barauni. The pipeline network will grow to 22,000 km, reaching Nepal. Petrochemical capacity will exceed 13 million tonnes by 2030. Indian Oil will enhance its retail network with EV chargers and CNG stations, aiming for net zero emissions by 2046, supported by a Rs 2.5 lakh crore energy transition investment. Sahney said, "Balancing India's auto-fuel demand with the global energy transition. *—PTI*

India emerges as Ukraine's top diesel supplier: Report

UKRAINE, 30 AUG

India has emerged as Ukraine's biggest supplier of diesel in July 2025, overtaking all other sources and accounting for 15.5 per cent of total imports, according to Ukrainian oil market analytics firm NaftoRynok. Daily shipments from India averaged around 2,700 tonnes, marking one of the country's highest monthly export figures this year. This represents a dramatic shift from July 2024, when India provided only 1.9 per cent of Ukraine's diesel requirements.

The surge comes against the backdrop of heightened trade tensions between New Delhi and Washington. The United States recently imposed 50 per cent tariffs on Indian goods over its continued purchase of Russian crude oil. The situation carries a striking irony: while the US penalises India for maintaining energy ties with Moscow, Indian diesel supplies are playing a critical role in sustaining Kyiv's wartime economy.

Indian-origin diesel reaches Ukraine via multiple routes, including tanker deliveries along the Danube from Romania and shipments through Turkey's Marmara Ereğisi terminal, which continues to operate despite partial sanctions.

Between January and July 2025, India supplied 10.2 per cent of Ukraine's total diesel imports, a fivefold increase compared with the same period last year. While India's share has now surpassed several European suppliers, its overall export volumes still trail behind Greece and Turkey.

In July 2025, other significant contributors included Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania's Orlen Group, and Sweden's Preem facilities, with Sweden recording its highest diesel exports to Ukraine since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion. *—Agencies*

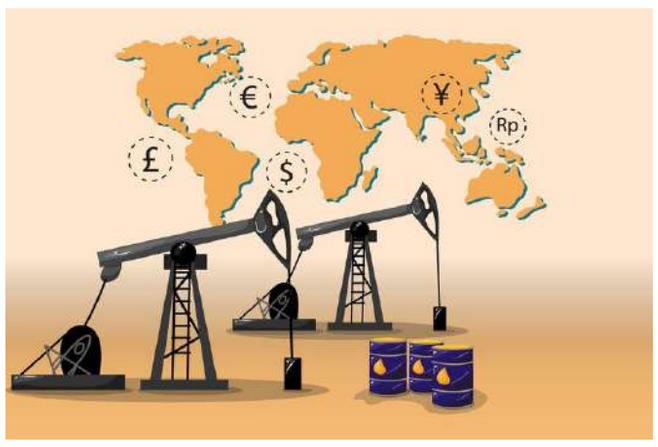


PHOTO: FREEPIK

ONGC REFINERIES TO CONTINUE BUYING RUSSIAN OIL, SAYS CHAIRMAN

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

ONGC Chairman Arun Kumar Singh on Friday said that the company's refineries will continue buying Russian crude oil as long as it is financially viable, said sources.

According to sources, the Chairman said, "As long as it's economical, we will keep buying every drop (of Russian oil) that comes to the market."

Additionally, ONGC Videsh's overseas portfolio spans 15 countries across five continents, with 32 projects—14 in production, four under development, 11 exploring, and three in pipeline. Key regions include Russia, Latin America, the Middle East & Africa, and Asia-Pacific, with projects in Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Azerbaijan, the UAE, South Sudan, Mozambique, Vietnam, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The company reported a 1 per cent rise in standalone crude oil production, with slowed natural gas decline, and nine discoveries including seven prospects. *—Agencies*

A 10-POINT PLAN

GTRI suggests govt schemes to shield India from tariffs impact

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), a trade-focused think tank, has suggested a 10-point plan to the central government, which it believes, if implemented, can shield India from the impact of US tariffs.

GTRI recommends that the government revive schemes and incentives focused on export promotion, customs reforms, dedicated e-commerce hubs, and stronger trade missions, along with the necessary skills.

These recommendations, if implemented, it believes, will shield jobs & sustain India's export competitiveness.

The sudden escalation of US tariffs on Indian goods, from barely 3 per cent a year ago to 50 per cent today, has exposed a "critical vulnerability" in India's export ecosystem, GTRI opined.

The 50 per cent US tariffs on Indian goods came into effect on 27 August. GTRI cited the example of Brazil, which faced the same 50 per cent tariffs from 1 August, 2025, asserting that it has responded quickly with a series of strong support actions.

Brazil responded "within weeks with credit support, tax breaks, government procurement, and WTO action, India has yet to announce relief for its exporters," the Indian think tank said. GTRI said, Brazil has invoked its Reciprocity Law to consider retaliatory tariffs while also filing a WTO complaint against Washington.

It suggested a set of recommendations that will not only help to cushion the tariff shock but also rebuild India's export competitiveness for a protectionist world. *—ANI*

Traders protest against the tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump on India, at Qutab Road chowk, Sadar Bazar in New Delhi, on Saturday

PHOTO: PTI

Carpet exporters seek relief

BHADOHI, 30 AUG

The carpet industry has urged the central government to provide a special bailout package for exporters, particularly in Bhadohi, following the 50 per cent tariff imposed by the US. The All India Carpet Manufacturers Association (AICMA) and the Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) met Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh over the issue. Bhadohi MLA Zahid Baig has also appealed to the Uttar Pradesh government for a 10 per cent bailout package. According to CEPC, India's carpet exports were worth Rs 16,800 crore last year, with 60 per cent going to the US. Bhadohi accounts for 60 per cent of these exports, making it the worst affected. Baig warned the tariff could hit 30 lakh workers, including 25 per cent women weavers, and urged both governments to act swiftly to protect 800 export units. *—PTI*

India, UAE to expand infra, energy, tech ties

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

India and the UAE discussed plans to expand bilateral trade and investment in sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and technology. Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal stated on X, "Honoured to welcome Dr @ThaniAlZeyoudi, the UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade, and congratulated him on his new role. Our discussions focused on expanding bilateral trade and investment in key sectors such as infrastructure, energy and technology. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to deepening the India-UAE partnership and unlocking new avenues of growth together."

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal with UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi

PHOTO: X/Piyush Goyal

Since the February 2021 signing of CEPA, bilateral trade has nearly doubled from USD 43.3 billion to USD 83.7 billion in FY 2023-24. Up to January 2025, trade stood at USD 80.5 billion.

Non-oil trade reached USD 57.8 billion in FY 2023-24, over half of total trade, with a target of USD 100 billion by 2030. Nearly 240,000 Certificates of Origin have been issued, with exports of USD 19.87 billion.

Non-oil exports to the UAE grew by 25.6 per cent since CEPA, reaching USD 27.4 billion, with key sectors including refined crude oil, gems and jewellery, electrical machinery, chemicals, and smartphones valued at USD 2.57 billion.

The two nations also reaffirmed commitment to defence cooperation during the 13th India-UAE Joint Defence Committee meeting. *—ANI*

India's economy set to grow 6.5% in FY26: BOB

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

India's economy is projected to expand by around 6.5 per cent in FY26, reflecting steady domestic momentum, said the Bank of Baroda. However, ongoing tariff negotiations pose a downside risk, potentially impacting the external sector. The projections align with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) forecast of 6.5 per cent, announced during its 6 August Monetary Policy Committee meeting.

The growth outlook is supported by a strong start to the year, with the GDP accelerating to 7.8 per cent in Q1FY26 from 6.5 per cent last year. Manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors, alongside positive consumption demand, contributed significantly. The report expects festive season spending and urban consumption recovery to further support growth, with expectations of another RBI rate cut and fiscal measures providing additional boost.

The official data shows nominal GDP grew at 8.8 per cent during April-June. Finance Ministry sources highlighted supply-side growth driven by manufacturing, construction, and services, with private final consumption expenditure reaching 60.3 per cent of GDP—the highest in 15 years. *—ANI*

OVER 9,800 PROFESSIONALS

Record skilled workers returned to Kerala from abroad: Report

Nearly 40 per cent of this workforce is concentrated in Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Kozhikode

PHOTO: ANI

KOCHI, 30 AUG

Kerala is witnessing a major inflow of skilled professionals returning from abroad, particularly from the Gulf region, according to a LinkedIn Talent Insights report.

The report was released at the Skill Kerala Global Summit organised by the Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC), a Kerala government advisory body, held here on Friday.

According to the study, more than 9,800 professionals have returned to Kerala from the UAE over the last five years, accounting for the largest share of returnees, followed by Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom with over 1,600 professionals each, while Qatar contributed over 1,400 and the United States more than 1,200, a K-DISC release said.

In terms of domestic migration, around 7,700 professionals moved back to Kerala from Karnataka, followed by Tamil Nadu (4,900), Maharashtra (2,400), Telangana (1,000) and Haryana (800).

According to LinkedIn, returnees are primarily seeking opportunities in IT, healthcare, tourism, and education,

- In terms of domestic migration, around 7,700 professionals moved back to Kerala from Karnataka, followed by Tamil Nadu (4,900), Maharashtra (2,400), Telangana (1,000) and Haryana (800)

while many are also returning to start businesses.

Stable employment, proximity to family, and a better work-life balance compared to high-pressure metros and overseas jobs are cited as key reasons for the trend, as per the report.

The report also highlights a 172 per cent increase in Kerala's professional talent pool over the last five years, placing the state ninth among Indian states. Nearly 40 per cent of this workforce is concentrated in Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Kozhikode.

K-DISC said that findings are expected to guide Kerala's future policies in talent development, global collaborations, and investment in emerging industries. *—PTI*

Five players fined for code of conduct breach in DPL

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Five cricketers, including Indian player Nitish Rana, were on Saturday fined between 30 and 100 per cent of their match fees for code of conduct breach in the Delhi Premier League match between South Delhi Superstarz and West Delhi Lions here. West Delhi Lions' Krish Yadav has got the maximum punishment, being fined 100 per cent of his match fee for a code of conduct violation relating to audible obscenity during the match. "Krish Yadav has been fined 100 percent of the match fees for a Code of Conduct breach under Article 2.3 (Level 2) for the use of audible obscenity during a match following an abuse from the opposing team player and pointing the bat towards the player," said a DPL statement.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Hockey: Indian team leaves for Women's Asia Cup

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Skipper Salima Tete said the Indian women's hockey team is determined to "secure a spot at next year's World Cup" as the side departed for Hangzhou, China, on Saturday to compete in the Women's Asia Cup. The 20-member team will have to win the tournament to secure India's spot for next year's World Cup. "This tournament is a really good opportunity for us to secure our spot for the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup next year, and we are focusing on that," Salima said in a release."Our priority at present is to top our Pool and reach the Super Fours. From there, we will take each game as it comes and make our way towards the trophy." India has been drawn in Pool B and is scheduled to face Japan, Thailand, and Singapore in the group stage. They will kick off their campaign against Thailand.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Deepika to miss Asia Cup due to hamstring injury

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Hockey India on Saturday announced that drag-flicker Deepika has not travelled with the national team to China for the Women's Asia Cup due to a hamstring injury sustained during a training session. Deepika, who will be in rehab for the next few weeks, has been replaced by Sakshi in the Indian squad for the tournament, which will be held from September 5 to 14 in Hangzhou. The winner will qualify for next year's World Cup to be held in Belgium and the Netherlands. —*PTI*

Mehak wins silver, Lovepreet Singh bags bronze

AHMEDABAD, 30 AUG

India's Mehak Sharma won a silver medal in the women's +86kg category while Lovepreet Singh settled for a bronze in the men's +110kg on the concluding day of the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships here on Saturday.Mehak lifted a total of 253kg (110kg in snatch + 143kg in clean and jerk) to end in second place at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex.Samoa's Iuniarra Sipaia won the gold after lifting 261kg (111kg snatch+150kg clean and jerk), while Commonwealth Games medallist Mary Taiwo Osijo of Nigeria bagged the bronze with a 231kg total lift (103kg snatch+128kg clean and jerk).—*PTI*

Rohit and Gill to undergo fitness test at BCCI's CoE

Indian squad is scheduled to be in Dubai on 4 September

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

India Test skipper and T20 vice-captain Shubman Gill reached the BCCI Centre of Excellence here for fitness assessment and preparations ahead of travelling to Dubai for the upcoming Asia Cup.

The Indian squad members are scheduled to assemble in Dubai on 4 September ahead of their tournament opener on 9 September against the hosts United Arab Emirates.

Senior batter Rohit Sharma and pacer Mohammed Siraj have also checked into CoE for pre-season fitness assessment.

The process might take place by Sunday, and it will be interesting to see how Rohit, who has retired from T20Is and Tests, approaches the new season. The 38-year-old is likely to tour Down Under in October for an ODI series (19, 23, 25), but it remains to be seen whether Rohit will turn out for India A in three one-day matches against Australia A on 30 September, 3, and 5 October at Kanpur.

In the case of Gill, a bout of flu had forced him to skip the ongoing Duleep Trophy quarterfinal against East Zone, where he was named as the North Zone captain.

Gill was recovering from the illness at his Chandigarh home before flying out to Bengaluru. Gill may fly out of Bengaluru to Dubai, as this time the players will reach Dubai in a staggered manner from their respective locations, unlike in the past when the team would assemble in Mumbai before travelling en bloc. Apart from Gill, wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma too has arrived at the CoE for pre-tournament preparations. —*PTI*

Shubman Gill and Rohit Sharma PHOTO: PTI

Arshdeep Singh, Mohammed Siraj, and Harshit Rana during the practising session in Bengaluru PHOTO: PTI

AC matches pushed back by 1/2 hour due to UAE heat

DUBAI, 30 AUG

The start time for 18 out of the 19 matches in the upcoming Asia Cup has been pushed back by half an hour from the original schedule due to the extreme heat in the UAE, the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) announced on Saturday. According to the revised timings, the matches will begin at 6.30 PM local time (8 PM IST).

The continental tournament, to be held in the T20 format this time, will run from 9 to 28 September across the two venues of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

"The start time for 18 out of the 19 DP World Asia Cup 2025 matches has been updated.

These matches will now begin at 6:30 pm local time (Gulf Standard Time)," the ECB said in a statement on its website. —*PTI*

VICTORY OVER CHIA-SOH

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty PHOTO: PTI

Feel redeemed, says Chirag Shetty

PARIS, 30 AUG

Star Indian shuttlers Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty assured India of a medal at the World Championships after defeating their nemesis, Malaysia's two-time Olympic medallists Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, in the men's doubles quarterfinals here.

A year after the heartbreak in Paris, where they lost to the same pair and missed out on an Olympic medal, the world No. 3 duo produced a commanding 21-12, 21-19 win in 43 minutes to avenge that loss and storm into the semifinals late on Friday night.

"Feeling really good. It was a rematch of sorts from the Olympics. And I think we finally got some redemption. It was the same court, same arena. A year back exactly. Olympics and now World Championships," Chirag said after the match.

"It's always a pleasure playing against them. We've always had some really tough battles. At the biggest of events. And really happy we could win today."

It will be Satwik and Chirag's second medal at the prestigious event after their 2022 bronze, extending India's streak of podium finishes at every edition since Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponnappa's breakthrough bronze in 2011.

The Asian Games champions will next face 11th seeds Chen Bo Yang and Liu Yi of China.

Asked if the Chinese will be underdogs, Satwik said, "Not at all. Playing semi-finals, no underdogs."

Chirag added, "Just like any other match that we played in this tournament. Take it one match at a time. They are a good, formidable pair. —*PTI*

Enzo Fernandez converts from the penalty spot for his second goal of the season PHOTO: X/@CHELSEAFC

Pedro, Enzo on target as Chelsea beats Fulham 2-0

LONDON, 30 AUG

Joao Pedro scored from Enzo Fernandez's corner before the Argentinian converted a penalty to give Chelsea a 2-0 home win over Fulham in the West London derby on Saturday, securing its second Premier League victory in a row.

Pedro leapt up to guide Fernandez's flag-kick into the net with a perfect header on the stroke of half-time, scoring his fifth goal in the last five competitive matches.

Chelsea doubled its lead five minutes into the second half after Trevoh Chalobah's shot hit Ryan Sessegnon's arm, resulting in a penalty. Fernandez made no mistake from the spot as Fulham conceded its third penalty goal in three straight league games.

Fulham, which had held Brighton & Hove Albion and Manchester United to 1-1 draws in its first two league games, suffered its first loss in the campaign.

Fulham enjoyed the better chances during the opening exchanges; Joachim Andersen curled a shot wide, and Alex Iwobi guided an attempt beyond Sanchez's post. However, in the 20th minute, the visitors found the back of the net. A Chelsea attack broke down on the edge of the Fulham box, and the ball was played to Rodrigo Muniz. He tried to roll Chalobah but caught the Blues defender. Play continued, and Sander Berge freed Joshua King, who broke forward, turned back inside Tosin, and fired into the near post. The travelling supporters erupted, but then came the VAR check. Referee Robert Jones was advised to go to the pitchside monitor and, on review, deemed that Muniz had fouled Chalobah. The goal was ruled out. —*PTI*

FIH JUNIOR WORLD CUP

Pakistan to visit India: Singh

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Pakistan will travel to India later this year to compete in the FIH Junior World Cup, Hockey India secretary general Bholanath Singh confirmed on Saturday.

Pakistan opted out of the ongoing Asia Cup in Bihar following the military conflict between the two countries, citing security concerns. It had raised doubts if the team from the neighbouring country would compete in the Junior World Cup to be held in the Southern Indian cities of Chennai and Madurai in November-December.

"The Pakistan team is coming to India for the Junior World Cup. They confirmed to us last night. I asked them about their availability after they opted out of the ongoing Asia Cup," Bholanath said. He said the preparations for the tournament are at the "final stage".

PHOTO: PTI

"Out of 24 countries, we have received the long list from 23 nations. Only Pakistan is left, which is hoping to receive in a day or two."

The Indian government recently formulated a policy that it would not have any bilateral sporting ties with Pakistan, but it won't stop the Indian teams from competing against Pakistan in multinational events.The policy was adopted in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 26 civilians and the subsequent Operation Sindoor carried out by India.

"I am very clear that whatever the Olympic Charter tells us, the government and Hockey India will abide by that and fulfil that. The Government of India is also clear that Pakistan can come and play against India in any international tournament," Bholanath said.

"The government has even cleared their visas, but now, why Pakistan didn't come, only they know." —*PTI*

Fan proposes in the stands during Aryna's match

NEW YORK, 30 AUG

Aryna Sabalenka has a US Open trophy. A fan at her match on Friday night now has a ring. A fan proposed in the stands inside Louis Armstrong Stadium during Sabalenka's third-round victory over Leylah Fernandez, and the No. 1 seed was among the people who couldn't help but enjoy the happy moment.

"I think it's the first time that someone proposed during my match," Sabalenka said. "It was a very sweet moment, but I was just trying not to start smiling, because it's very cute and I believe they're super happy right now." Fans began cheering as soon as they saw the man drop to one knee with the ring in his hand. —*PTI*

Malaysia stun Korea 4-1, B'desh crush Chinese Taipei 8-3

RAJGIR, 30 AUG

Korea's Asia Cup title defence received a massive jolt after being stunned 4-1 by Malaysia, while Bangladesh crushed Chinese Taipei 8-3 in the second round of Pool B matches of the hockey tournament here Saturday.

In the second match of the day, Five-time champions Korea surged ahead in the second minute through a reverse stick field goal by Geonhyo Jin.

Earlier in the day, Bangladesh completely dominated after the change of ends and pumped in as many as five goals in the last two quarters. Md Abdullah (4th, 26th minutes), Rakibul Hasan (42nd, 43rd), and Ashraful Islam (45th, 58th) scored a brace each for Bangladesh, while Sohanur Sobuj (36th) and Rezaul Babu (56th) found the Chinese Taipei net once. —*PTI*

Duleep Trophy: Ankit & Dhull's 100 grind East Zone

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Skipper Ankit Kumar and promising batter Yash Dhull made contrasting hundreds to place North Zone on the cusp of the Duleep Trophy semifinals here Saturday.

North Zone chose to bat again despite holding a 183-run lead. While Ankit (168 batting) and Dhull (133, 157 balls) further bolstered that situation, taking their side to a mammoth 388 for two at the end of the third day's play for an overall lead of 563 runs.

Ankit Kumar PHOTO: PTI

But the third day of the quarterfinal match was all about the ruthlessness of North Zone in extending their supremacy through Ankit and Dhull, who milked 240 runs for the second wicket off just 290 balls.They did it in their own way. Dhull was all aggression, and Ankit went about his task in a more mellowed manner.

After the early dismissal of Shubham Khajuria (21), who was castled by Suraj Jaiswal, East Zone bowlers struggled to make any impact on the North pair. Senior pacer Mohammed Shami found occasional movement and troubled the batters, but that was all the East bowlers could manage on the day.

Dhull's offside play was exceptional as 57 runs came off in the arc between point and cover region, as he went past 50 in 49 balls.

Yash Dhull PHOTO: PTI

But the 22-year-old had a big slice of fortune when Sharandeep Singh dropped him on 48 at covers off left-arm spinner Manishi, and the Delhi batter did not require any second invitation to exploit the reprieve.

Ankit, meanwhile, went past fifty in 74 balls, and soon his younger partner completed his eighth first-class century in 112 balls.

The only time Dhull looked a bit unsettled was in the 90s when Shami, who restricted himself to just 11 overs on the day, troubled him with a slew of quick snorters, but he withered the storm. —*PTI*

AC MILAN FINALLY WINS

Cremonese stays perfect in Serie A

CREMONA, 30 AUG

Former Chelsea players Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Christian Pulisic scored as AC Milan beat host Lecce 2-0 for its first win in Serie A on Friday.

Actress Helen Mirren donned a yellow Lecce shirt and watched from the stands, but there was little to excite the home fans or the Oscar-winning star of "The Queen."

Milan had two goals chalked off after a video review, but it eventually got one that counted midway through the second half when Loftus-Cheek rose higher than everyone else to glance home a flighted free kick. U.S. striker Pulisic sealed the win with an assured finish under the advancing goalkeeper four minutes from time.

Cremonese's Filippo Terracciano celebrates after scoring during the Italian Serie A soccer match PHOTO: X/@ACMILAN

The win was a relief for Milan, which started the season with a shock defeat at home to newly promoted Cremonese.

Lecce has one point from its first two games.

Earlier, Cremonese became the first newly promoted side since Sampdoria in 2012 to win its first two games on return after a hard-fought 3-2 win at home to Sassuolo.

Reports in the Italian media suggested David Nicola's side was close to signing 38-year-old former Leicester City striker Jamie Vardy on Friday, but it did not need help in front of goal in the first half.

Filippo Terracciano put the home side ahead with a header in the 37th minute, and two minutes later, veteran Argentine midfielder Franco Vázquez made it 2-0. —*PTI*

Rahul Dravid and RR part ways ahead of IPL 2026

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Rajasthan Royals on Saturday announced that its association with head coach and former skipper Rahul Dravid has ended.

"Rajasthan Royals today announced that head coach Rahul Dravid will conclude his tenure with the franchise ahead of IPL 2026. Rahul has been central to the Royals' journey for many years. His leadership has influenced a generation of players, instilled strong values within the squad, and left an indelible mark on the culture of the franchise," the franchise stated in a post on social media.

"As part of the franchise structural review, Rahul had been offered a broader position at the franchise, but has chosen not to take this. The Rajasthan Royals, its players, and millions of fans worldwide extend heartfelt thanks to Rahul for his remarkable service to the franchise," the statement added.

Dravid was appointed Rajasthan Royals head coach in September 2024 on a multi-year contract and oversaw the team's IPL 2025 campaign.—*PTI*

Rahul Dravid PHOTO: PTI